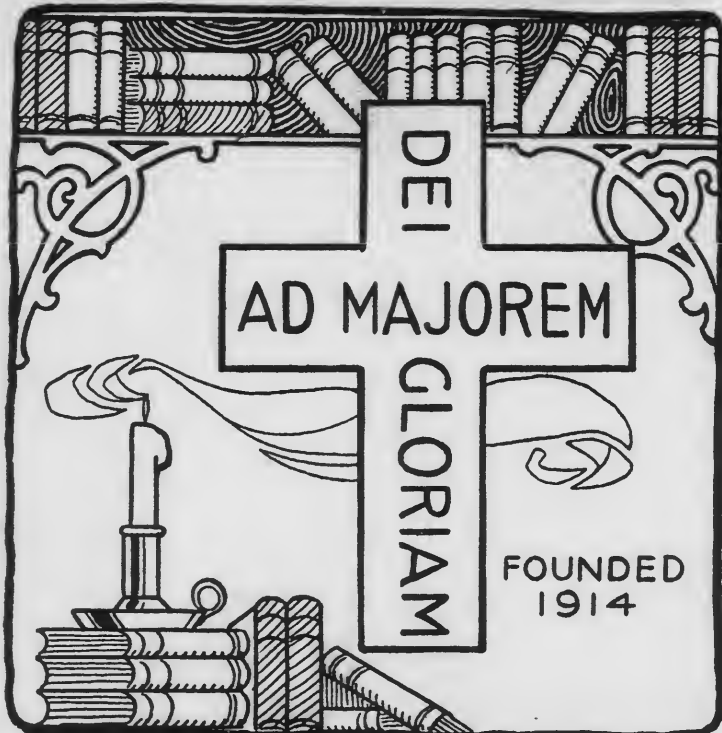


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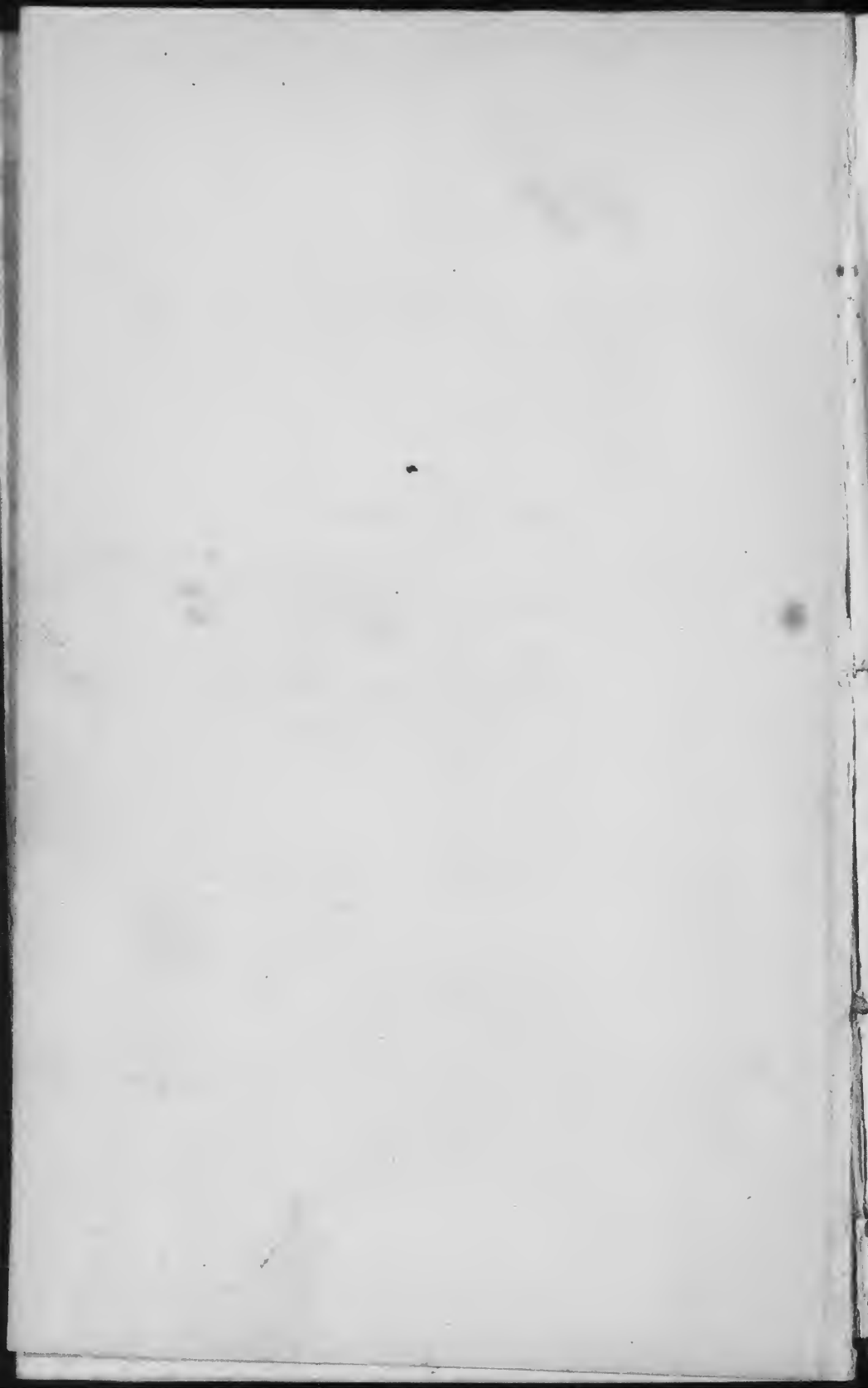
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Frank Noton

Presented by Julia Barker

Halifax Nov^{3rd} 4th 1845



A

HISTORY OF
WESLEYAN METHODISM
IN HALIFAX,
AND ITS VICINITY,

FROM ITS COMMENCEMENT TO THE PRESENT PERIOD.

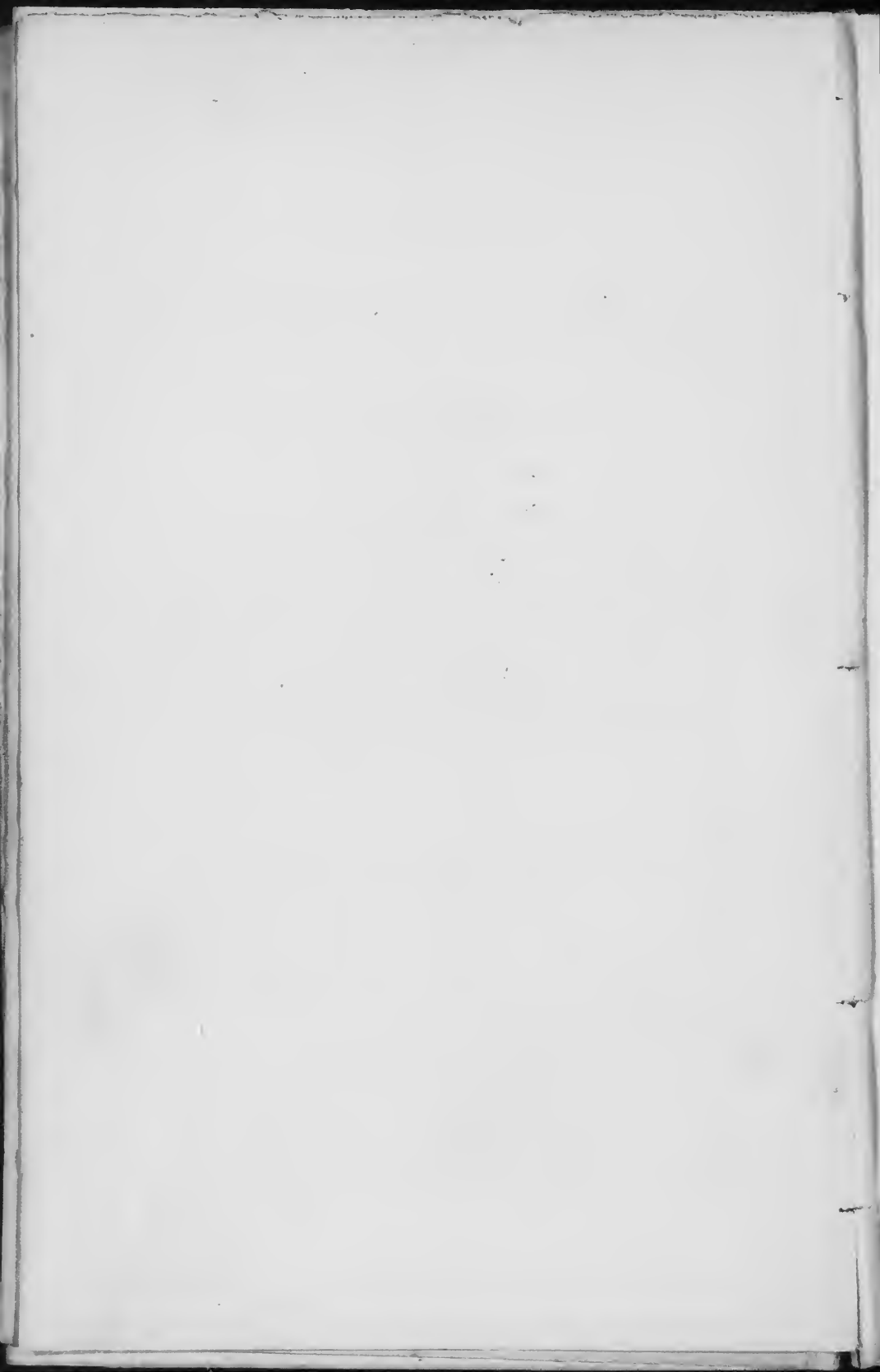
~~~~~  
BY J. U. WALKER.  
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"I have considered the days of old; the years of ancient times."

Psa. lxxvii. 5.

HALIFAX:
HARTLEY AND WALKER.
SIMP KIN, MARSHALL, & Co., LONDON.

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MDCCCXXXVI.



PREFACE.

IT is to be deplored that the collection of materials for a work similar to that presented in the following pages, was not commenced at an earlier period. The first race of Methodists have disappeared from the stage of existence, while but few of their immediate successors exist as isolated monuments of bye-gone days. So that, while desirous of preserving the rapidly disappearing memorials of olden times, the writer has had to encounter no small difficulty from the nature of the source whence alone they could be derived. An impotent old man, or an aged, decrepid female, with shattered memory, is not the most likely to afford a clear and connected narration, though it be of the history of a Christian community to which they are attached. Nevertheless, though in many instances compelled to depend upon such informants, the writer has availed himself of every concurrent evidence, and in cases where facts were necessarily based

upon oral testimony only, he has generally "established" them "out of the mouths of two or three witnesses."

Of the history of Methodism in this important town and circuit, a "Sketch*" was published in 1824, bearing the quaint motto—"Better late than never." With the exception of this pamphlet, the rise and progress of the Society in Halifax has been unrecorded on the instructive page of history: and it is to be lamented that the author of this small publication, (whose capacity for the undertaking none could doubt,) deferred its publication until it was *too* late to perform the work well, and the hurried manner in which it was carried through the Press did not increase its accuracy.

Several of the aged friends whose testimony has been of essential service to the writer, were removed from this life, before the correction of the ensuing pages had been completed. Mrs. Spencer, who had imparted to him considerable information relative to the early history of the cause, (some of which she communicated on her death-bed,) was called to her reward on the 26th day of January, 1836, being in the 85th year of her age. Two other pious old Methodists, Mrs.

* "A Sketch of Methodism in Halifax and its vicinity, from its commencement in the year 1741 to the present period, 1824. By W. Hatton." Halifax: Thomas Walker. pp. 36.

Bintcliffe and Mrs. Winnard, also died shortly after the writer's first, and as it proved final interview. Thus, had the writer delayed the preparations for this work but a few months, he would perhaps never have gained that intimate acquaintance with the early affairs of the society, which he has been enabled to obtain, by the narrations of these departed saints.

In Mrs. Spencer, especially, the connection of the past and present times was rendered complete, while as a daughter-in-law of the first Methodist, and herself a member of society during the long period of 64 years, her acquaintance with the subsequent history of the cause, as well as of its establishment, greatly exceeded that of any other individual now living. Several others, also, who have proved of essential service in the progress of this work, are hovering on the edge of Jordan, and had these aged Israelites, the remnants of the second race of Methodists, carried their knowledge of the rise and progress of Methodism in the various hamlets with which they were connected to the grave, the historian would then have had to contend against increased and insurmountable difficulties.

Contemplating the subject under this aspect, though the writer cannot but lament that his task had not fallen into earlier and abler hands, he

congratulates himself that he undertook the work at a period so favourable to his enquiries.

From a redundancy of matter, and the necessity of a connected and chronological arrangement in the pages of this work, many interesting details are withheld. Nevertheless the writer pledges himself that no material facts or incidents are omitted, and he has preferred incurring the extra expense of upwards of forty additional pages, rather than break his first promises either as to the cost or completeness of the work.

It now remains for the writer to acknowledge the kindness of those ministers and gentlemen who, by the loan of valuable and important documents, have proved themselves to be his true friends. To him it is a source of gratification that these favors were, in many cases, voluntary and unsolicited.

MAY, 1836.

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HISTORY OF

WESLEYAN METHODISM IN HALIFAX,

AND ITS NEIGHBOURHOOD.

CHAPTER I.

Remarks upon Mr. Wesley—his ministry—the blessings by which it was attended. His associates. Methodism in particular districts—happy effects in the neighbourhood of Halifax. Singular reasons for the change—its true cause. John Nelson—his conversion. Remarkable Providence in the introduction of Methodism into the North of England. Nelson meets with David Taylor—attacks his ministry. Spread of the work—remarkable dream.

THE separation of the founder of Methodism from that moral and religious darkness which enveloped, to no small extent, the various sects and parties in this kingdom, must be accounted a blessing of no ordinary value or magnitude. Rising from the mists of superstition—the clouds of error—the dense fogs of ignorance—and shining with the splendors of his strong and nervous mind, Wesley pursued a path, occasionally dimmed by obstruction I admit but perfectly glorious and heavenly. This eminent christian and divine must ever be considered as an instrument in the hand of Providence for signally and powerfully enlightening the

christian world. The limits of the work now entered upon prevent any remarks upon the subject of his ministry, the powerful manifestations by which that ministry was accompanied, and its extraordinary and marvellous success.

No uninspired man, up to that time, exemplified so clearly the glorious gospel of the blessed God. Never, perhaps, was that gospel so fully disentangled from the scaffolding of opinions which had adhered to, and was considered by some as a component part of the structure. The amount of good thus effected, time will fail to develope; the blessings disseminated through the world might be hinted at, for it would be a task perfectly easy to point out in almost every empire, positive advantages accruing from Methodism. But beyond all these, there is a rich, extended, and brilliant constellation of collateral blessings, realized and experienced by other christian denominations; leaving it evident that from the effects produced by the members under the Wesleyan polity, and the stimulus afforded to others who differ from them in point of doctrine and church government—and even to the establishment itself—the commencement of Methodism must necessarily be regarded as an era encircling itself with a glory eminently calculated to attract the attention and regard of the christian and the historian.

Thus then, the admission of Dr. Southey in his *Life of Mr. Wesley*, comes with peculiar force,—“that he awakened a spirit of religion, not only in his own community, but in a church which needed something to

rouse it." And surely if ever there was a period in the ecclesiastical history of the establishment, when she might justly be styled an hemisphere of bright and sparkling stars, yet to an awful extent void of the sun of the system, it was when the Wesleys and a Whitfield were miraculously influenced to preach the gospel in its original and pristine purity. The ministerial functionaries of the church were men of no ordinary talent, but in too many instances void of that prime requisite for a minister of Jesus Christ—experimental, heartfelt religion. The clergy, or at least a portion of them, could discourse and harangue with considerable fluency; they could adorn their orations with the offsprings of a vivid imagination, illustrate them systematically, and garnish them with learned quotations from the sages of Athens or of Rome. But their sermons were without power; the scripture was not clearly explained; a frigid morality was insisted upon, while the heart remained untouched. And cold and ineffectual indeed must be that ministry, however learned and scholastic, which strikes not at the root, which aims not at the heart.

If the state of religion among the clergy was at such a low ebb, well may we infer, the people must be proportionally dark and depraved; profanity marked their character, while their spirits discovered great apathy and coldness. In fact, how could it be otherwise? Supposing that there might be some who hungered and thirsted after righteousness, what availed their attendance in the sanctuary, if their pastor had

nothing to present save a dish of tulips? What could a splendid oration, or an highly intellectual, yet Christless sermon, do for individuals in such circumstances? It would serve the rather to increase their misery, except "Jesus Christ and him crucified" were the burden of the man called to preach the gospel. Men do not "gather grapes of thorns or figs of thistles." But every heart must rejoice in the mighty change effected by the labors of Mr. Wesley, for unquestionably "he awakened a spirit of religion in a church which needed something to rouse it."

While making even this scanty reference to the originator of Methodism, who cannot but admire his noble band of associates? In their conduct and lives, we have a fine example for imitation. Never was the arm of the Lord so fully manifested as in the case of the early promulgators of Methodism. What power had they with God! What men of ardent, prevalent, successful prayer! What disinterested love did they manifest! What zeal—what magnanimity in their enterprizes! What simplicity—what power in their public ministrations! They preached, and men fell wounded and pricked in the heart; souls dead in trespasses and sins started into life, and signs and wonders were wrought. But our fathers! where are they? The standard bearers, even they have failed! Let but their mantles fall upon their successors, let them imbibe their spirit, copy their example, and tread in their footsteps;—let the prayers of the church be fanned into one mighty flame, and the kingdom of our

God and of his Christ shall be established ; the praises of him, whose name is the word of God, shall be echoed from the West, and from the rising of the Sun ; while

The dwellers in the vales and on the rocks
Shout to each other, and the mountain tops
From distant mountains catch the flying joy.

To trace the rise of Methodism in this particular district, may serve to shew, among other things, the deep rooted malice and prejudice which opposed its growth and progress ; as well as the glory of the Holy One of Israel, in strengthening the feeble ones of this world, and assisting them eventually to surmount every barrier, and to overcome every difficulty ;— to silence the opposers of christianity, however determined and bigotted ; and finally establish a structure bearing the impress of an hand divine,—a structure which will not only perpetuate to time's remotest bounds the name of him who needs no emblazoned marble to tell to ages yet unborn, the religious enthusiasm and pious zeal which inspired his breast,—but a structure built of materials, and founded on principles which through succeeding years shall continue to embrace millions of immortals, till when time is lost in eternity's vast ocean, the blessings realised not only by this district, but by the world, shall be fully revealed.

The doctrines and discipline of Methodism are so sufficiently known to the generality of my readers, as to render any remarks supererogatory ; and by those who may not be conversant with them, it will readily be assented, the limits or purpose of this work do not

allow a dissertation under these heads. That they have had a beneficial and happy effect in this neighbourhood, is apparent to the most superficial observer. Beyond even the manifested positive good, the high state of moral cultivation exhibited in many thriving villages, and the orderly and peaceful demeanour of their inhabitants, must, in a great measure, be attributed to these causes. I am by no means insensible to that mighty reformation remaining yet to be effected in some remote hamlets; yet there is evidently a palpable change produced, and it is obvious that the more the inhabitants are brought into connexion with each other, (and especially in so hallowed a place as the sanctuary,) their natural rudeness is softened down, and the passions kept in some degree of subjection. Through the bare preaching of the gospel, a moral influence is spread among the poor and untutored, extended and oft repeated intercourse is obtained, and the consequent result proves highly beneficial.

It is deeply to be lamented that there are elements of misery and vice fearfully at work, not only presenting themselves in open and undisguised forms; but secretly and cunningly undermining the structure, virtue and religion may have reared. Notwithstanding this, and the temptations tending to recklessness and riotousness, which ever and anon are presented to the laboring classes of the community, there is yet preserved in a high degree, orderly demeanour and peaceable habits, making it evident that some mighty power is in continued operation, tending to counterbalance

that insidious evil, exercised and evinced under so many and varied forms. In spite of demoralizing influences, they preserve peaceable habits; in spite of the allurements and snares which are thrown around them, they respect that which is good; and though not universally, yet generally, we discover a religious spirit diffused throughout our crowded manufacturing population.

This plain and striking fact has not failed to attract attention, and has led to many singular theories as to its origin and causation; absurd arguments and wild reasonings have been put forth to trace, if possible, that stream which has been productive of such luxuriant verdure and inestimable blessings.* The extended intercourse to which allusion has been made, in the erection of places of worship in villages destitute of such advantages; the varied and multiplied means of grace, peculiar to Methodism, which have ramified into more secluded spots, and spread their influence among a people whom no other religious services would

* The most curious theory hitherto started upon the subject, is that broached by an eloquent writer, who, fully aware of the mighty reformation effected, has artfully and somewhat strangely endeavoured to prove that "the power to which these effects are, in a very considerable degree to be ascribed, we hesitate not to affirm, is Sacred Music." This argument will to some minds carry with it a degree of plausibility; it must be conceded that an highly cultivated taste for Sacred Music, (a taste for which this district is justly applauded,) produces consequences similar to those already mentioned. But the universality of this grand moral regeneration forbids me to allow the sole instrumentality of music. The cause is by far inadequate to the effect. We are bound to look to another and more powerful source, whose influence is able to extend itself with a continually increasing impetus. Where otherwise can we discover such power, save in the rich effusions of the Holy Spirit upon the numerous religious ordinances, and especially upon those singular to Methodism?

have reached,—these, I respectfully submit, may with truth be attributed as the cause, the foundation of that great good—that moral influence—that omnipresent cultivation, so amply developed in the neighbourhood with which we are concerned. Not that I would extenuate any other denomination of christians, or wreath undeserved laurels around the brow of Methodism, yet it must be admitted, her inherent advantages and numerous means of grace; the number of her pulpit ministrations, her prayer meetings, her class meetings, her sunday schools, her multiplied meetings for social intercourse, eminently serve to bring the inhabitants, even of the most sequestered spots, into frequent union with each other; and if no real good tending to salvation is wrought, it cannot be denied, that rudeness and vulgarity are frequently removed; from the principles inculcated and the doctrines taught, a general respect of man to his fellow is engendered, and thus a platform is raised; the building may follow, but at all events, there is a reformation effected, and which, because of the sound and rational principles upon which it is founded, could have arisen from no other source.

But the christian may proceed a step farther; highly as he is led to appreciate the blessings of a moral nature strewed in this populous manufacturing district, there is yet more extended good. Not only has rudeness and barbarity been intenerated, but sound evangelical principles fixed in the heart. Through the instrumentality of a preached gospel, Methodism and chris-

tianity have prospered in a degree highly gratifying to the religious mind. Opposition has been swept away, and the cross has triumphed; the powers of darkness have shrunk from the contest, and the shouts of victory resounded even to heaven itself. For perhaps in no part of the kingdom are the Methodists so numerous and so zealous in every good work. One of the most favorite seats of Methodism, unquestionably, is Yorkshire; here she has taken deep root, here sprouted and budded; here she has sprung up adorned with such fragrance and beauty, that no sect can be pointed at as having produced such a beneficial effect upon the mass of the people.

The introduction of Methodism into this district, as well as the county itself, must be attributed to the zealous and praiseworthy exertions of a man, never to be forgotten in the annals of the religious history of the Methodist Society, I refer to John Nelson. And it is due to him, as the principal founder of Methodism in Halifax, that the people of this persuasion should be familiarized with his name,—his history,—his character; and that at least a cursory notice should be taken of one so eminently owned of God.

John Nelson was born at Birstal, in 1707, and was apprenticed to a stone mason. He became a subject of the operations of the spirit when between nine and ten years of age, and from his journal, (a work entirely devoid of dates, rendering it no easy task to wade through such a labyrinth without a guide to direct, or data upon which to fix,) he particularly alludes to one

Sunday night, "as I sat on the ground, by the side of my father's chair, while he was reading the twentieth chapter of the Revelations ; the word came with such light and such power to my soul, that it made me tremble, as if a dart was shot at my heart ; I fell with my face on the floor, and wept till the place was as wet where I lay, as if water had been poured thereon. As my father proceeded I thought I saw everything he read about, though my eyes were shut ; and the sight was so terrible, I was about to stop my ears that I might not hear, but I durst not. When he came to the eleventh verse, the words made me cringe, and my flesh seemed to creep on my bones while he said, ' and I saw a great white throne, and Him that sat thereon, from whose face the heavens and the earth fled away, and there was found no place for them ; and I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God, and the books were opened ; and another book was opened, which is the book of life ; and the dead were judged out of those things that were written in the books, according to their works.' Oh what a scene was opened to my mind !" He continued alternately the subject of cheering—blooming hope, and dark—black despair ; now groaning with all bitterness of spirit, then catching faint glimmering rays of consolation, and cheering his soul with the radiant beams, frequently did he exclaim, "peace, peace."

It is conjectured that somewhere about the year 1740 he went to London, where Providence guided him to the preaching of Mr. Wesley ; then did true conviction

fasten like an arrow and rankle in his heart. After carrying the burden of sin for some time, he found that lasting and substantial peace for which he had long and vainly sought. He continued laboring at his profession and preaching, by his life, Jesus Christ and him crucified. The complicated series of trials and persecutions through which he was called to pass, served to ground him more firmly upon the rock—the sure foundation. To converse with the holy and devout man under whose ministry he had received such benefit, had long been his prayer and ardent desire. The opportunity at last arrived, one Sunday he perceived Mr. Wesley at St. Paul's, and in going up the aisle to receive the sacrament they fortuitously walked side by side; they knelt together at the communion table, and left the church in company. "We continued (says Nelson) in discourse all the way from St. Paul's to the further end of Upper Moorfields; and it was a blessed conference to me. When we parted, he took hold of my hand, and looking me full in the face, bade me take care I did not 'quench the spirit.'"

It was strongly impressed upon Nelson's mind, to leave London for Yorkshire; and though in full employ, so remarkable were the influences under which he labored, that he left the busy city, and came down to Birstal, where his fond hopes had dwelt upon the conversion of his wife and relatives, through the instrumentality of the many and earnest appeals he had made to them in epistolary correspondence; but in this matter he was grievously disappointed, and when he

began to relate the history of his conversion, and open out to their minds the gospel plan of salvation, they, "out of love and kindness to him" earnestly entreated him not to spread abroad such strange doctrines; his wife absolutely declaring if he still persisted in saying he knew his sins were forgiven, that she "dare not, for shame, put her head out of doors with him." His mouth however was not to be stopped by persuasions, entreaties, or threats; for he was not ashamed of the gospel of Christ,—to him "the power of God unto salvation."

Scarce a finer display of the movements of the Spirit in the awakening of sinners, was ever manifested, than in the raising of that powerful body with whom we are now concerned. And amid the miraculous extension of Methodism, in no part of its rise is the hand of God more manifest than in its introduction into the North of England. Here was a poor stone mason, laboring in a busy and thronged city; he is induced to attend the ministry of Wesley; his soul is converted; once he speaks to that holy man, and then is lost amid the multitude; a mysterious impulse leads him to Yorkshire, and a few days after reaching Birstal, one David Taylor, who had begun to itinerate as a preacher, came to exhort in that place, and Nelson relates, "I went to hear him, and a dry morsel his sermon was. Several that were acquainted with him followed me, and wanted to know how I liked the discourse. I was backward to tell them, but they pressed hard on me, and said, 'do you not think he is as good a preacher as Mr. Wesley?' I said, 'there is no comparison between his preaching

and Mr. Wesley's; he has not stayed long enough in the large room at Jerusalem.' After they had been gone some time, they came again to ask me 'what I meant?' I said 'he is not endued with power from on high.' They went and related to him what I said; and he told me since, that if I had been present, he could have stabbed me; yet he could not rest till he went to hear Mr. Wesley, in London." Now, mark the hand divine. David Taylor, when Methodism and Wesley were unknown in the North, was led in a providential manner to give a few exhortations to perishing sinners, but further than this he seems not to have proceeded, and as it regards the formation of a society, the thought was never entertained. His zeal brought him to Birstal, where the already related circumstances transpired; the blunt, open, candid, point-blank declaration of John Nelson awakened such a desire in his breast that "he could not rest" till he proceeded to London to hear the famous Wesley; he went, and the issue was his soul's salvation. He returned into Yorkshire, and with power and effect preached the unsearchable riches in Christ Jesus, also establishing Methodist societies, and expounding their doctrines. Here we trace providential guidance, and must acknowledge that Nelson's journey into Yorkshire was not for nought.

But it required a greater agency than Taylor, for the wide and extended field of labor which now opened out, and the subject of this brief sketch commenced preaching in public. Previous to this, his remarkable statements having been noised abroad, his house was

daily filled with people, who even came from considerable distances, to hear from the lips of this individual the doctrines he believed and experienced. He sat and reasoned, and frequently while explaining the way of salvation to them, and preaching Christ, his hearers would begin to cry for mercy; his brother and six of his neighbours were in this manner brought to enjoy the liberty of God's dear children, and his wife was soon joined to the number. Meanwhile the labors of Taylor were crowned with great success, in fact, like a fire among dry stubble, so did the work spread. John Nelson's converts became so numerous, that he found it absolutely necessary to meet them once a week. Thus was a society of real genuine Methodists formed in Yorkshire, before Mr. Wesley ever had visited that county in the capacity of a preacher. One of the greatest loads which encumbered the spirit of Nelson was his entire hopelessness of ever again seeing Mr. Wesley; he had never corresponded with him, and never spoke to him, save once; notwithstanding here was a society of his followers formed, and as yet the instrument in the formation of that society had had no communication with him whose name they bore, either in the shape of counsel, direction, or advice. However, in a remarkable manner, Nelson's mind was disburdened of this load.

Elihu said, (and who can doubt its authenticity?) "God speaketh once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth it not. In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed;

then he openeth the ears of men and sealeth their instruction." And so it was,—“one night, (says Nelson) after a day of fasting, I dreamt that Mr. John and Mr. Charles Wesley were both sitting by my fireside, and that Mr. John said, ‘I will stay but a few days now: for I must go into the North, and return at such a time and then stay with you a week.’” Four months after this remarkable dream, one of his neighbours intimated his intention to proceed to London, and if possible to see that Mr. Wesley, of whom so much had been said. Nelson penned a short letter to his father in the gospel, and besought him, (after stating the revival which had taken place,) to afford such instructions as might be deemed necessary for “an unpolished tool” like himself. His neighbour presented the letter, and immediately wrote back that Mr. Wesley had promised to be at Nelson’s house the Thursday following. Such good and unexpected news as this melted poor John into tears. “That day, (Sunday, when he received the letter) the Lord blessed our souls much, while we were praying that he would conduct his servant in safety to us, and bless his coming amongst us. When he arrived at Birstal, he sent for me to the inn, from whence I conducted him to my house, and he sat down by my fireside, in the very posture I had dreamed about four months before: and spake the same words I dreamed he spoke.”

I may here make mention of a letter from John Nelson, found in a *Collection of Letters on sacred subjects*, printed at Sheffield in 1761. It has no date, neither

can I inform the reader to whom it was addressed, but that it was written about this time is apparent from the notice it takes of the circumstances we are now describing. He gives an account of his conversion in London and of his journey to Yorkshire. The success of his ministry is detailed in the following manner ;—"at my coming into this country, no man stood with me, but my name was cast out by professors and profane, so that I was like an owl in the desert; but a few who were bruised by the hand of God soon heard of, and received, the doctrine of *Conscious Pardon*, and in a little time seven of them found it verified in themselves : but Mr. J. reproved them for confessing it before the world. Accordingly he sent for me, and desired me not to speak so boldly,—it would make the country use us ill. I told him if every man in the world was to cast stones at me, I would tell what God had done for my soul, and what he is willing to do for others : for I loved all mankind, and feared no man.

"The people of the neighbouring towns have frequently sent for me, to hear of this new doctrine : for they were quite sure that no man could know his sins forgiven in this world. But I proved it from the written word of God, and from the doctrine of the church of England, In a little time many cried out, 'Lord, grant this thing unto me !' Our number of believers soon increased to thirty; then I found I must speak publicly among them, for the people thronged and filled my house. In this I found cowardliness in my flesh, and craved for death, or that God would take my speech

from me rather than call me to it ; but still I found my mind full of the matter ; and when I spoke, the people started as if I had thrown fire-brands at them. So the Lord setting to his seal, and owning his word, I had not any excuse : then I said, " Lord if thou sendest me to hell to preach to devils, thy will be done." At the people's request, I now preach every night in the week in general, and the work increases much ; and yet I am (in a sense) alone. I want to have some correspondence with Mr. Wesley. My heart is knit to him as the heart of one man, and so are many of the children whom God hath called by my mouth. Some of them indeed fall into *stillness*, and they say I have the spirit of conviction, but not the gift of building up souls : however, those who stand fast, as they received Christ, are more holy and happy, and so, I think, as well built up."

Mr. Wesley's visit to Yorkshire at this time will, in a subsequent chapter, be more particularly alluded to. We may mention, by the way, it had the effect of establishing the society formed under the auspices of John Nelson. People from all quarters began to flock to Birstal, on the Sabbath day,—but it would only swell the work beyond its prescribed limits, to follow this revival in its various ramifications. Birstal for some time was the central point to which the people flocked, and it was no uncommon circumstance for the early Methodists in these parts, to attend the morning 5 o'clock preaching at Birstal, and while regardless of the weather, accounted it no small privilege thus to be favored.

What will their delicate descendants say to this, when a cold drizzling morning is urged as a sufficient excuse for their non-attendance in a comfortable chapel, built perchance but a couple of stones' throw from their residence. But it will be needful to pass swiftly over the history of Nelson, and bring it down at once to the period when his persecutors carried their fiendish rage, and foul malignant malice to its fullest extent, only remarking, that, in the interim, his time was fully occupied in preaching the gospel of peace, not merely at Birstal, but at Halifax, its neighbourhood, and various other parts of England.

CHAPTER II.

John Nelson's impressment for a soldier—his sufferings. William Shent, at whose house Alice Calverley is converted,—she becomes the means of Nelson preaching at Skircoat Green. Blakey Spencer and Abraham Kershaw,—brief allusion to John Bennett and his ministry. Conversion of John Hatton, Lightcliffe. Mr. Wesley's visit to Yorkshire in 1742,—he preaches at Birstal, and at Mrs. Holmes's, Smith House. Persecution endured, especially by the Preachers, in 1744. Mr. Wesley preaches at Skircoat Green,—allusion to the society at that place—anecdote concerning two of the members. First sermon preached by Mr. Wesley in Halifax. William Darney's societies—conclusion of Chapter.

WHEN sinners turn from the error of their ways, it is not out of character for those who have been wont to gain a livelihood, partly by sin and wickedness, to discover their rage and malignant hatred. We are not surprised then, to find that among the most bitter enemies of Nelson, were the ale-house keepers. One of this fraternity, whose tap had frequently flowed in accordance with the appetites of Nelson and his converts, offered to lay a wager, (in 1743) that before ten days expired John Nelson would be sent for a soldier. This threat was soon noised abroad, and wherever Nelson went to preach, his friends informed him that the constables had orders to press him ; his answer, however, generally was “ the will of the Lord be done : for the

fierceness of man shall turn to his praise." Careless of consequences, on Friday he went to preach at a place called Adwalton; the business appears to have been previously arranged by the cunning of the church parson, the Rev. Mr. Coleby, and the ale-house keepers, for at the close of the sermon, the deputy constable rushed into the house and took the preacher into custody. From thence he was dragged to a public house, several of his friends remonstrating against such conduct, and offering to give bail, one of them even offered the sum of £500 for his appearance the following morning. But no, the man of consequence, "dressed in a little brief authority," with a loud laugh declared he could not take bail for a Methodist, and Nelson was accordingly imprisoned.

Next morning he was brought to Halifax, several of his friends coming with him, no sooner was he ushered into the presence of the Commissioners, than they smiled one at another, at the same time giving orders, that no person should be admitted into the presence of their worshipfuls, save the prisoner and his attendant. Mr. Thomas Brookes however, with one or two more, managed with considerable difficulty, to squeeze through the doorway, and post themselves alongside Nelson. The proceedings commenced by the Commissioners enquiring of the deputy constable, "how many men he had brought?"

Deputy Constable. One.

Commissioners. Well, and what have you against him?

Deputy Constable. Why, gentlemen, I have nothing to say against him, but he preaches to the people; and some of our townsmen don't like so much preaching.

The grave assembly, including the church parson, (Nelson's most bitter enemy,) broke out into immoderate laughter, in the midst of which one of them swore, he should go for a soldier, and then he would have preaching enough. Nelson's spirit was provoked, and with considerable firmness he reproved this shameless profanity. The bench told him he must go for a soldier, and accordingly ordered the military officer in attendance to take him away. "Stay, (said Nelson,) here are several of my honest neighbours: you ought to give me the liberty of another man, and hear what they say of me, whether I am such an one as the warrant mentions or no."

This appeal was only laughed at; the Commissioners pointing to the parson, seated on the bench, replied,— "here is your minister, and he has told us of your character, and we shall hear no more." At this juncture of affairs, Mr. Brookes stood forward in Nelson's defence, and laid a petition on the table, bearing many influential signatures, and testifying that he had done no evil, but had behaved himself well in the neighbourhood; that he was an hard-working honest man, and had always creditably maintained his family. Mr. B. would have urged several arguments in defence of Nelson, but for the impudent and scandalous behaviour of one of the worthies who sat upon the bench. This open enemy to christianity, covered forsooth with

sheep's clothing, stood up and declared, that "young Brookes lived with a woman of the worst character in our town," thinking thereby to quash the high character of the petition which in so short a period of time he had been the instrument of affording. Every one in court were persuaded of the utter falsity of such a statement, and Nelson, finding his case hopeless, addressed the Commissioners, stating, that as there appeared to be neither law nor justice for him, because of his being a Methodist, he would pray for their forgiveness in thus acting towards him. After some little altercation between the parson and Nelson, the Commissioners ordered the officer to take him away; he did so, and in a manner which made poor Nelson none the better for being so roughly handled. This abominable transaction caused his friends in Halifax deep concern for one whom they so highly estimated.

Nelson with three others were conveyed from Halifax to Bradford, where the foul malice of the minister and his crew was fully manifested. "When we were about half way (says Nelson) between Halifax and Bradford, one of the soldiers said to me, 'Sir, I am sorry for you: for the captain is ordered by the Commissioners to put you in the dungeon; but I will speak to him, and if he will let me have the care of you, you shall lie with me, for the dungeon is as loathsome a place as ever I saw.' I thanked him for his offer." But when they arrived at Bradford, Nelson was immured in the dungeon, and surely the vengeance of his enemies must now have been sufficiently wreaked. The dun-

geon into which this poor, persecuted Methodist was thrown, was the most filthy hole the mind can well conceive; a slaughter house lay above it, and through the floor sunk all the blood and filth:—its horrid impurity at that time cannot be pictured. At five the following morning he was brought out and marched to Leeds, from thence to York, where he joined the regiment to which he had been assigned. To trace him through all his troubles and fiery trials, might be interesting, but not in this instance expedient.

After having endured these things with exemplary patience and resignation, he at length received a discharge, obtained for him by some high personage in the realm, and accordingly left the regiment. He then commenced itinerating as a preacher, and probably no early minister suffered so much in preaching the cross. He finished his course somewhat suddenly, on July 22nd, 1774. The last day of his valuable life he dined with a friend in Leeds, and a return of a complaint to which he had been subject, obliged him to leave abruptly. When he came home he was seized with alarming symptoms which continued to increase till the tabernacle fell, and his disencumbered spirit winged its way to paradise. Mrs. Fletcher writes the following upon this bold and unflinching early Methodist preacher,—“he was an extraordinary man for tenderness of conscience, watchfulness over his words, especially for self denial, and rigid temperance. He made it a rule to rise out of bed at twelve o'clock at night, and sit up till two for prayer, and converse with God, then he

slept till four, at which time he always rose." He was a man of great bodily strength and vigor; of good understanding and ready thought; of firm integrity and genuine piety; mighty in the scriptures and apt to teach: it is useless to add, that the labors of this holy man were crowned with complete success.

The writer will doubtless be excused in giving this lengthy sketch of Nelson. It must be remembered he was the first Methodist preacher in Yorkshire, and the chief instrument in founding Methodism in Halifax. Plain, honest, simple, and straight-forward, he bore down opposition, trampling under foot the calumny of the world. The wise looked, and laughed,—the ungodly heard, and sneered,—the wicked rose up in mighty rebellion, but onwards he pushed his course, wielding no weapon save a bloodless gospel, and arrayed in no armour except the nakedness of truth, and with this he conquered; with a boldness peculiar to himself he charged embattled legions,—and now, look abroad! Did he labor in vain? Did the scorn of the wise, the ribaldry of an infidel brood, the hot persecution of the world,—did these united foes prevail in putting down the plain, unsophisticated preaching of Nelson, and of his heroic band of associates? Look abroad! Pry into the thickly populated manufacturing towns of Yorkshire, survey its rural districts, its villages, its hamlets. Is Methodism unknown? Does the plain man and the unlettered stare and gaze at Wesley's name; or have the polished and gifted forgot a name ever musical in our ears? Nay is it not the case, that from the mere child

laboring in our crowded factories, to the man exalted in wealth, in affluence, and honors, Wesleyan Methodism is understood, and in many instances practised and enjoyed? What hath God wrought!

From the commencement then of Nelson preaching in 1741, may we date the rise of Methodism in these parts. A revival taking place at Birstal, (as we have already mentioned,) crowds flocked to hear Nelson, and among other conversions was that of William Shent whose curiosity had brought him from Leeds. When he returned home there arose a great uproar on account of his declaring he knew his sins forgiven. "Some however (says Nelson) believed his report, and had a desire to hear for themselves; neither could he be content to eat his morsel alone, for his heart panted for the salvation of all his neighbours.

"The Christmas following he desired me to go and preach at Leeds; but when I gave notice of it to the society, they advised me not to go till we had kept a day of fasting and prayer. So we humbled ourselves before the Lord on the Friday, and on the Sunday night I went to Leeds, several of the brethren accompanying me. As we were going over the bridge, we met two men who said to me, 'if you attempt to preach in Leeds you must not expect to come out again alive; for there is a company of men that swear they will kill you.' I said, 'they must ask my father's leave; for if he has any more work for me to do, all the men in the town cannot kill me till I have done it.'

"When we got to brother Shent's, he had provided

a large empty house to preach in, and it was well filled with people. As soon as I got upon the stairs, I felt an awful sense of God rest upon me, and the people behaved as people that feared God, and received the word with meekness."

Among the persons who heard Nelson at Shent's house was Alice Calverley, a daughter of Abraham Kershaw, who had in the former part of his life been a speaker among the Quakers, and who resided at Skircoat Green, in the house now occupied by Mr. Tate, gardener, on the right of the road leading from that place to Copley Hall. We are thus particular in describing Kershaw's residence, on account of after circumstances. Alice Calverley appears to have been touched with what she had heard, for upon visiting her relations at Skircoat Green, her constant theme was the "new and strange doctrine" she had heard at Leeds. Her statements awaked the curiosity of Blakey Spencer, who listened with wonder and astonishment to the simple and artless recital. At length he determined upon hearing this "strange doctrine," this "new religion," himself; being informed John Nelson would preach at Birstal on a certain day, he went to that place, and providentially the word came with power to his heart, and he partook of the glorious liberty of the children of God. Feeling deeply interested for his friends and neighbours, after some little time had elapsed and on another visit to Birstal, he invited the preacher over to Skircoat Green: christian love and a philanthropic desire to promote his master's kingdom dictated not a denial.

In accordance with his promise John Nelson came to Skircoat Green ; the news of his approach had spread to such an extent that the house of Blakey Spencer was found too strait to contain the people, they therefore adjourned to Abraham Kershaw's, but before the service commenced the people had augmented, insomuch as to render an out-door service necessary, accordingly the congregation stood in front of the house. A washing tub, mouth downwards, served for a standing place ; and here, amid huge and tremendous rocks (with which the habitation was then surrounded,) far from din and tumult, in the most solitary spot imaginable, the Calder silently murmuring along the valley, and the distant hills echoing with the hymning chorus, Nelson preached the first Methodist sermon in this neighbourhood. The people were deeply affected ; the old grey-headed man, (he was near eighty years of age,) the owner of the house listened with deep concern, while the big tear bursting forth, trickled down his furrowed cheek. He became the first fruits of the Methodist doctrine, and thus Nelson's visit was amply rewarded.

Blakey Spencer, Kershaw, and a few others now frequently met together, to comfort and cheer each other's spirits, and I have to observe that even amid their wild retreat they became the subjects of persecution. One of Kershaw's daughters, named Elizabeth, joined the society, and through her pressing invitations induced John Bennett to visit these parts. This John Bennett was an early convert of David Taylor's, a name still fresh upon the memory of the reader, from the circumstances men-

tioned in the preceding chapter. John Bennett had embraced the Moravian faith, but in 1743 he united himself with Mr. Wesley, and commenced laboring as an itinerant preacher in the counties of Yorkshire, Lancashire, Cheshire, and Derbyshire, and became eminently instrumental in doing good. He formed a circuit, branching out into each of these counties, of which he was superintendant. It was generally known and called by the early preachers, John Bennett's round. Halifax or rather Skircoat Green, (for these two places have been frequently confounded together, in the very early existence of Methodism in these parts,) seems to have been included in this extensive circuit, and John Bennett's visits were productive of considerable good, and rendered more valuable on account of John Nelson's impressment as a soldier.

It is painful however to record that the people suffered the loss even of the services of John Bennett: this good and holy man publicly renounced the Arminian faith, and attached himself to Mr. Whitfield. In Mr. Wesley's Journal we find the following record, "April, 1752, T. M. gave me a full account of John Bennett's renouncing all connexion with me; adding, on the 30th December last, after he had said many bitter things against you to the congregation at Bolton, he spread out his arms, and cried, Popery! Popery! Popery! And the same thing he said to all the stewards at the quarterly meeting, on New Year's day." The calvanistic doctrine narrowed his sphere of usefulness, and cramped his energies; he had been wont to

“preach thirty-four times in the fortnight,” in addition to meeting the societies, visiting the sick, and engaging in other ministerial functions; it was his custom to travel about two hundred miles every fortnight, while laboring in his extensive circuit, and in many places he had been the means of raising societies, long before Mr. Wesley ever visited such spots. But after all this, after his rejoicings and his tribulations; his love for and extensive usefulness in the cause; he charged the venerable—the holy Wesley, with preaching popery and then left the connexion. The sinking of such a noble vessel drew into the vortex a considerable portion of the society. He settled in Cheshire, became minister of a chapel built for him at Warburton, and in 1759 he died.

Among other conversions which it may be necessary to mention as flowing from the labors of Nelson about this time, is that of John Hatton. He was born at Lightcliffe in 1724, and attended upon the ministry of Nelson, at Birstal. Upon Nelson’s impressment John Hatton appears to have forgotten his first love, and it was not until the release of the preaching soldier that he became again solicitous for the salvation of his soul. He attended the preaching at Mrs. Holmes’, of Smith House, joined himself to the first Methodist society at Lightcliffe, and on the Sabbath day regularly attended the preaching at Birstal, though six miles distant. After his translation from the kingdom of darkness into God’s marvellous light, he opened his door for the preaching of the gospel, being solicitous that his neighbours should hear that precious word of life. He became

exceedingly zealous in the cause of the Redeemer, and steadily adorning the gospel himself, was careful to reprove sin in others ; this upright conduct brought him under great contempt and reproach, but "When a man's ways please God, he maketh his enemies to be at peace with him ;" and so it was in this instance ; he was made the happy instrument of bringing some of his most bitter enemies into the path of peace and life, so that they threw off the cloak of their maliciousness, and ranked themselves amongst his intimate friends. In November 1792, he breathed his soul into the hands of his Creator and Redeemer.

The earnest solicitude which Nelson exhibited that Mr. Wesley might come down into Yorkshire, has already been set before the reader ; and now we advert to the accomplishment of these wishes and prayers. Mr. Wesley left London in May 1742.

"Tuesday 25th, I set out early in the morning with John Taylor, (since settled in London,) and Wednesday, 26th, at eight or nine o'clock reached Birstal, six miles beyond Wakefield. John Nelson had written to me some time before ; but at that time I had little thought of seeing him. Hearing he was at home, I sent for him to our inn : whence he immediately carried me to his house, and gave me an account of the strange manner wherein he had been led on, from the time of our parting in London.

"I preached at noon, on the top of Birstal hill, to several hundreds of plain people ; and spent the afternoon in talking severally with those who had tasted of

the grace of God, All of these, I found, had been vehemently pressed 'not to run about to church and sacrament, and to keep their religion to themselves, to be still, and not to talk about what they had experienced.' At eight I preached on the side of Dewsbury moor, about two miles from Birstal."

Mr. Wesley left Birstal for Newcastle, where he was joyfully received. "After preaching the poor people were ready to tread me under foot, out of pure love and kindness. It was some time before I could possibly get out of the press. I then went back another way than I came. But several were got to our inn before me; by whom I was vehemently importuned to stay with them, at least a few days; or however, one day more. But I could not consent; having given my word to be at Birstal, with God's leave, on Tuesday night." It is quite refreshing to peruse such a statement as this recorded in his Journal.

On June 1st "we came to Birstal, where (a multitude of people being gathered from all parts) I explained to them the spirit of bondage and adoption. I began about seven, but could not conclude until half an hour past nine.

"Wednesday 2nd, I was invited to Mrs. Holme's, near Halifax; where I preached at noon, on *Ask and ye shall receive*." Mrs. Holmes, a good and pious lady, frequently mentioned by Mr. Wesley, resided at Smith House, Lightcliffe, and appears to have been the first person in that neighbourhood who braved the hostility of the times. In the early part of her religious career

she joined herself with the Moravians, and uniting with unquestionable piety considerable property, she built at her own expense, a place of worship for the members of that persuasion. In 1744, or about that period, she renounced the Moravian faith, opened her house for the Methodist preachers, and aided them both by her counsel, her prayers, and her purse. She died in 1781.

From Lightcliffe Mr. Wesley rode to Halifax, where he spent considerable time with Dr. Legh, the then vicar. When speaking of the Doctor, Mr. Wesley entitles him "a candid enquirer after truth," and it would readily be supposed he must have merited such an eulogium : nevertheless Dr. Whitaker, the historian, in touching upon his character, gives it a different coloring. Dr. Legh, he says "was a low churchman, and popular among the dissenters, a disciple of bishop Hoadley, and his co-adjutor in what was called the Bangorian controversy, about which he seems to have been more in earnest than his duty as a preacher, which he is said to have performed in a very careless and languid manner. He was a man of great singularity of character, subject to fits of absence and forgetfulness, which not unfrequently exposed him to ridicule." It was certainly incompatible with the notions of this learned author, that a minister of the establishment should be "popular among the dissenters,"—here was Dr. Legh's prime offence ; had he but steeled his heart against those who dared to think differently than himself and to adopt forms of worship dissimilar to those which he performed ; had he but avowed an inveterate

hostility to those low and vulgar men who rose from "cobblers' stalls to the pulpit," then would he not have been stigmatized "a low churchman."

The writer apprehends after all, that the principal reason why the character of Dr. Legh has thus been treated, was based upon the fact of his being "a disciple of Bishop Hoadly, and his coadjutor in what was called the Bangorian controversy." A word upon this accusation. The Bangorian controversy arose from a sermon preached by Dr. Hoadly, bishop of Bangor, before his Majesty king George I. at the royal chapel, St. James's, on Sunday, March 31st, 1717. BELSHAM, in his *Memoirs*, vol. i. p. 174, affords us the following account of this noted controversy. "As the foundation of this famous discourse, the bishop chose the declaration of Christ to Pilate: My kingdom is not of this world: and the direct and undisguised object of it was to prove that the kingdom of Christ, and the sanctions by which it is supported, were of a nature wholly intellectual and spiritual; that the church, taking the term in its most unlimited signification, did not, and could not, possess the slightest degree of authority under any commission, or pretended commission, derived from man; that the church of England, and all other national churches, were merely civil or human institutions, established for the purpose of diffusing and perpetuating the knowledge and belief of Christianity, which contained a system of truths, not in their nature differing from other truths, except by their superior weight and importance, and which were to be inculcated

in a manner analagous to other truths ; demanding only from their more interesting import, proportionably higher degrees of care, attention, and assiduity in the promulgation of them. It is scarcely to be imagined, in these times, with what degree of false and malignant rancor, these plain, simple, and rational principles were attacked by the zealots and champions of the church. On the meeting of the convocation, a committee was appointed to examine this famous publication, and a representation was quickly drawn up, in which a most heavy charge was passed upon it, as tending to subvert all government and discipline in the church of Christ ; to reduce this kingdom to a state of anarchy and confusion ; to impugn and impeach the royal supremacy in matters ecclesiastical, and the authority of the legislature to enforce obedience in matters of religion, by severe sanction. A sudden stop, however, was put to these disgraceful proceedings, by royal prorogation ; and from that period the convocation has never been convened, but as a matter of mere form, and for the purpose of being again prorogued. The controversy which then commenced was carried on for several years, with great ability and animation on the part of the bishop, aided by various excellent pens, though opposed by men whose learning and talents gave an artificial lustre to bigotry and absurdity. No controversy, however, upon the whole, ever more fully and completely answered the purpose intended by it. The obscurity in which this subject had been long involved, was dissipated ; the public mind was enlight-

ened and convinced ; church authority, the chimera vomiting flames, was destroyed ; and the name of Hoadly [and we may add of Legh “his coadjutor in what was termed the Bangorian controversy”] will be transmitted from generation to generation, with increase of honor, of esteem, and grateful veneration.”

From what has been advanced we are mistaken if the remarks of Dr. Whitaker will not be considered, in the present day, rather in the light of an eulogium upon the character of his fellow laborer in the vineyard of Christ ; and as to the attempt to magnify petty foibles into dark shades of character, could anything be more vain, for who among the learned and great have not their weaknesses ?

The primitive churches became the subjects of many and sore persecutions, the principal hatred being manifested towards the preachers. Having brought our history down to 1744, the year previous to the Scotch rebellion, this lamentable occurrence proved a source for fresh supplies of malice being poured upon the Methodists. They were charged with conspiracy and the stigma of “rebels” fastened upon them ; and when the enemy could not justly prove them guilty in this respect, they were seized upon for soldiers. The reader has already been made acquainted with John Nelson’s seizure, and the same hot spirit of persecution was shewn to others. And certainly, during this civil commotion, when the Pretender with his troops of highlanders made his sudden descent upon England, it was a straightforward course to put down the Methodist

Preachers by drafting them into our armies and setting them in battle array against the highland chieftains and their fierce and powerful followers. Some of the poor preachers were hunted as with blood hounds from town to town, and when caught, subjected to a series of protracted cruelties.

These proceedings caused great grief to the societies already established, and when Mr. Wesley visited Yorkshire, in May, 1744, he says—"Tuesday, 15th, after comforting the little flock at Norton, I rode the shortest way to Birstal. Here I found our brethren partly mourning and partly rejoicing on account of John Nelson." Two days after Mr. Wesley preached at Great Horton, but it does not appear he preached at Halifax, till Feb. 24th, 1746, "when" he says, "I preached to a whole company of Quakers: the good man of the house (about four score years old) had formerly been a speaker amongst them, but from the fear of man he desisted, and so quenched the spirit that he was in darkness for near forty years, till hearing John Nelson declare the love of God in Christ, life again sprung up in his soul." This appears to have been the first sermon Mr. Wesley preached in the immediate neighbourhood of the town. The house where he lifted up the standard of the cross, we have mentioned before, as the one occupied by Abraham Kershaw.

It was at the conference in 1746, that circuits were first mentioned in the economy of Methodism. England contained six, the fifth of which was York, in-

cluding Yorkshire, Cheshire, Lancashire, Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, and Lincolnshire. A circuit of respectable magnitude, it must on all hands be admitted. The comparatively insignificant band of preachers and assistants compared with the vast number of preaching places they had to supply, necessarily made their visits "few and far between." And then again, nearly all of them after taking certain rounds, had to labor with their hands for the food that perisheth, so that remembering the peculiar situation of the societies then formed, in thus being destitute for so long a period of the gospel ministry, we are led to wonder that they manifested such stability, and in these long interims prospered so greatly. As a sequel to these remarks there is a pleasing fact, in the case of Keighley, Mr. Wesley preached here in 1746, and joined ten members into a class, thus forming a small society; upon a subsequent visit, as will be seen in an extract shortly to be given, the number had increased to above a hundred.

The society appears to have continued at Skircoat Green for some time, and exerted themselves with no small ardor in raising the means for supplying themselves with the presence of some gospel and Methodist ministry. The "angel-visits" of these men, were looked upon with peculiar feelings, and it was no uncommon occurrence for a party to proceed a few miles out of the town, and form an escort around the blessed messenger whose business was to proclaim the gospel of peace. The early preachers having no regular board allowed, were necessarily thrown upon the benevo-

lence of the people. Wesley himself, the head of the body, the founder of the whole had mainly to depend upon the gifts of charity for his bread and his clothing. To provide for these necessities the few pious souls at Skircoat Green regularly laid by a trifle per week, and a high source of pleasure and gratification it was to them, when their funds would allow an earnest appeal to a preacher to come over and cheer them by his services. Among the foremost in affording pecuniary assistance was Blakey Spencer.

Skircoat Green then, is the soil where Methodism was first implanted in this immediate district. And this humble village may well be termed "the mother church." She is the mother of Methodism in these parts, and a good and affectionate mother she proved, her bowels yearned with compassionate solicitude for the town of Halifax, and the writer received an interesting anecdote concerning two of her pious and devoted sons, (one of whom was John Tindal, a zealous and hearty Methodist,) who had long felt for Halifax, and at last determined to wrestle with God in private; on an appointed night they met on the adjoining moor; here they continued in earnest prayer and the burden of their petition was, that the Lord would revive his work, and that it "might reach Halifax."

We have now to refer to a visit of Mr. Wesley to the North, in 1747. "Thursday, April 30th, I rode to Keighley. The ten persons I joined here are increased to above a hundred. And above a third of them can rejoice in God, and walk as become the gospel. Fri-

day, May 1st, I read prayers and preached in Haworth church to a numerous congregation. In the evening I preached at Skircoat Green, and baptized Elizabeth K. (Kershaw.) Sat. 2, I preached at Halifax to a civil, senseless congregation. Monday, 4, at his earnest request I began examining W. D.'s (Darney's) societies. At three I preached at Great Harding; in the evening at Rough lee, where there was a large society. But since the men of smooth tongue broke in upon them, they are every man afraid of his brother: half of them ringing continually in the ears of the rest, 'no works, no law, no bondage.' However we gathered above forty of the scattered sheep, who are still minded to stand in the old paths.

"Tuesday 5, I preached at Rough lee at five; about eleven at Hinden, and about three at Widdup, a little village in the midst of huge, barren mountains, where also there was a society. But Mr. B. had effectually dispersed them, so that I found but three members left.

"We rode thence about five miles to Stonesey gate, which lies in a far more fruitful country. Here was a larger congregation at six o'clock than I had seen since my leaving Birstal. They filled both the road and the yard to a considerable distance, and many were seated on a long wall adjoining, which being built of loose stones, in the middle of the sermon all fell down at once. I never saw, heard, or read of such a thing before. The whole wall, and the persons sitting upon it, fell down together, none of them screaming out, and very few of them altering their posture,

and not one was hurt at all; but they appeared sitting at the bottom, just as they sat at the top. Nor was there any interruption either of my speaking or of the attention of the hearers.

“Wednesday 6th, I rode to Shore, four miles south from Stonesey, lying about half way down a huge, steep mountain. Here I preached at twelve to a loving, simple hearted people. We then climbed up to Todmorden Edge, the brow of a long chain of mountains, where I called a serious people to *repent and believe the gospel.*”

It appears that considerable harm had been done to the societies, “the men of smooth tongue had broken in upon them,” and with a serpent’s wile and a serpent’s wickedness, insidiously “scattered abroad[†] fire-brands, arrows, and death.” Elizabeth Kershaw, whom Mr. Wesley baptized, was the daughter of Abraham Kershaw, and proved an efficient auxiliary to the infant society. It appears after service had been concluded, at Skircoat Green, Mr. Wesley hastened to Halifax, where he preached for the first time, but what success he met with unfortunately cannot be ascertained, and all the remark he made upon the occasion, was simply this—“I preached to a civil, senseless congregation.”

Several societies in the neighbourhood[†] had been raised up under the agency of one William Darney, (it was this man’s societies to which there is an[†] allusion in the preceding extract,) and it may be necessary briefly to notice this character, more especially as he is in-

timately connected with a part of the Rev. W. Grimshaw's life, a name hereafter to be more particularly alluded to. We close this chapter then, having notified the introduction of Methodism to Skircoat Green, in 1741, the various incidents upon its rise, and its general history to the year 1747, when the first Methodist sermon was preached in the town of Halifax by Mr. Wesley.

CHAPTER III.

Further allusion to William Darney—interesting anecdote. Mr. Grimshaw's conversion—particulars respecting his life, involving several remarkable circumstances. Mr. Whitfield preaches at Erwood. Mr. Grimshaw becomes one of Mr. Wesley's assistants. Extracts from various letters relative to the work of God in the neighbourhood. Thomas Lee enters into the ministry—visits the societies under Mr. Grimshaw's superintendence. Thomas Mitchell—his conversion—interesting features in his history—he becomes a preacher.

METHODISM had taken deep root at Todmorden and the neighbourhood ere Mr. Wesley visited that place, and the instrument which was made the means of producing such beneficial effects was the noted William Darney. According to a Memoir of Mr. E. Stanley, by his son, in the Methodist Magazine, for 1826, in which there is some notice taken of this personage, "he possessed few personal attractions; of a broad Scotch dialect; and when dwelling on the terrors of the Lord, terrible to behold; but a man of deep piety, strong sense, and burning zeal, with a courage that fearlessly defied all opposition. There was a rich vein of evangelical truth in his preaching, often delivered with the quaintness of some of the old puritan preachers, which pleased and profited many." In

proof of his undaunted courage the following interesting anecdote is extracted from the memoir, just mentioned. About the year 1755 there was a revival at Alnwick, in Northumberland, which roused the wickedness of the wicked. A number of strolling players being in the town, they determined to mimic the revival, and accordingly prepared a play against the Methodists: the principal performer of course would be William Darney. The play however through some unknown cause was not performed. "Soon after this, as Mr. Darney was riding past their temporary theatre, (a barn fitted up for the purpose of exhibition,) the players who were lounging and basking in the sun, said, in a tone sufficiently loud for him to hear, 'here is Scotch Will; let us mob him.' On hearing this Mr. Darney, who was a man of prodigious size, and when he chose of a terrific countenance, being mounted on a very spirited horse, immediately rode up to them, and making his horse stand upon his hinder feet, at the same time elevating his whip, he said, with a voice of thunder, 'ye sons of Belial come on.' The poor actors were afraid; and very thankful to atone for their insolence by individually begging his pardon and promising to behave better ever after. This they were careful to do, for no one after this ventured to insult him."

Mr. Grimshaw, of Haworth, had already begun to render his christian and ministerial character pre-eminently useful, but it was not till he had been induced to hear William Darney that he obtained a clear notion

of the doctrine of justification by faith. When he truly enjoyed the glorious liberty of the blessed gospel, his labors became more abundant, and in conjunction with Paul Greenwood and Jonathan Maskew, holy and devout preachers, he visited the counties of York and Lancaster.

William Darney visited Todmorden, Bacup, and the neighbourhood, and was instrumental in raising societies, which were generally characterized as "William Darney's societies." And among his early converts was John Maden, who afterwards profitably engaged in the work of the ministry: he was likewise one of the first members in Todmorden, as appears from MR. EVERETT'S *History of Methodism in Manchester*, "We find the humble itinerant (Mr. Darney) in Todmorden and its adjacencies, in the month of May, 1744, and the first notice of his appearance is in a barn at Gauksholm. While delivering the word of life to the people, John Maden, who had been invited to hear from the novelty of the circumstance, and who long afterwards adorned the christian profession, was first led to the discovery of his deplorable condition by nature. His eyes were suffused with tears, and it was with difficulty he was restrained from crying aloud before the auditory. Wm. Darney continued in the neighbourhood, nearly the space of a fortnight, preaching every evening; and though the place was five or six miles from the residence of John Maden, he was never absent. With a view to render his ministerial labors more extensively and permanently beneficial,

Wm. Darney united about ten persons into a religious society, in the vicinity of Todmorden, one of whom was John Maden, who was never prevented from giving his weekly attendance the greater part of twelve months, though resident at the distance specified." He subsequently introduced Methodism in his own neighbourhood, in Rossendale, where he raised a society, over which he was placed leader.

Mr. Grimshaw now made a point of visiting the surrounding villages and towns, and was considered as Mr. Wesley's *assistant* in these parts. He superintended the societies and appears to have united the superintendancy with the stewardship of his extensive circuit. We have already noticed Mr. Wesley's first visit to Haworth, and from that period Mr. Grimshaw entered into closer alliance with the Methodists, and to no man scarcely, than this holy apostle, was the infant society at Skircoat Green, and the one subsequently formed in the town, indebted.

While tracing the rise and progress of Methodism in this district, to pass silently over those venerable saints, who, in the hands of an all-wise God, were instrumental in bringing about so great—so glorious a work, would be high culpability on our part. Those bright and glowing characters inspire our hearts with finer sentiments and nobler wishes, than the contemplation of the chivalry of our ancestors, the deeds of our heroes, or the patriotism of our senators. We see on the one hand, a pure celestial flame concentrated on the christian's heart, whose vivid brightness discovers those

actions which shall not only benefit in time, but prove of advantage when time is no more ; while on the other hand, we perceive the achievement of those objects which at best only serve to benefit man in this life, having no relationship to man's immortality. Among the first noble and highly exalted characters, which deserve our attention, is the respected name already mentioned—the Rev. Wm. Grimshaw, a clergyman of the Establishment, at Haworth, in the parish of Bradford.

Brindle, near Preston, was the place of his nativity ; he was educated at the grammar schools of Blackburn and Heskin, and for some time resided at Cambridge. Having received necessary qualifications, he was ordained in 1731, and accepted the charge of a congregation at Todmorden, where his conduct was far from being consistent or scriptural. In 1742, we find him minister at Haworth, and the blindness from his eyes being removed, he became a genuine christian, and a powerful, bold, and apostolic minister. His fame consequently spread, and those from afar came and heard his preaching. Feeling in the true spirit of genuine christianity, that the world was his parish, he sought not the consent of the ministers of neighbouring parishes, but obeying his Master's call, preached Jesus Christ and him crucified, wherever an opening appeared.

Such an example of unwearied assiduity in the work of the ministry is only outstript by Mr. Wesley's labor and diligence. Mr. Grimshaw seldom passed over a

week without preaching twenty sermons. To one of his friends in a neighbouring parish, whose wife had been sick, he thus apologises—"I am sorry that I have not been able to visit your wife, I have not wanted inclination, but time, for I have had thirty times to preach this week." He travelled much upon horseback, and though the multiplicity of his engagements were so numerous, regularly supplied his own church on the Sabbath day. It is not to be expected that this holy man would pursue his career, without having to encounter and surmount those difficulties which strewed the path of the early Methodist preachers. The men of the world, then as now, loved darkness rather than light. Let but a bright luminary approach, and by its lucid glare discover their blackness of heart and vileness of conduct, and it was sufficient to excite their malevolence—their bitter feelings of animosity. They hated the idea of being regenerated, they knew their actions were wicked,—these being lighted up and brought out to view, conscience rung an alarm, starting their very souls, and in many instances their next endeavour was, to extinguish—to put out those lights which had so fully exhibited their wickedness and depravity. Hence, and from bitter feelings fostered by Satanic agency, they congregated in mobs, insulted, imprisoned, and violently abused the early preachers; indeed, to such an extent did they carry their lawless outrages, that the interference of the legislature only served to stifle and eventually put down such shameless and shameful procedure. The subject of this

sketch was assailed with such persecution as the foregoing, but by the holiness of his life, the power of his ministry, and the gracious influence which attended his word, he eventually overcame and triumphed over all opposition. Not satisfied with such a conquest as this, he went to the enemies' camp, and single handed frequently made a powerful attack, bearing away the laurel of triumph.

It would be an injustice to withhold his conduct upon a certain noted occasion, which even now is kept in remembrance. It was customary upon the holding of the "wake," at Haworth, to close the festivities with games of horse racing,—and racing of such a character as to drain off the worst dregs of society to this scene of rioting and drunkenness. Mr. Grimshaw had frequently endeavoured to put a stop to this mischievous custom. His remonstrances, however, were but little regarded, and in fact, any other person than himself, would have received much abuse, in barely making the attempt to stop an established practice so agreeable to the taste of vulgar depravity. They so revered his character, as to listen to his earnest expostulations with a measure of patience, but still persisted in what so much grieved him. But he gave himself unto prayer for some time before the feast, entreating God to put a stop to this evil. When the race time came, the people assembled as usual, but were soon dispersed. Even before the race could begin, dark clouds covered the sky, which soon poured forth such excessive rain, that the people could not remain upon the ground, and it

continued to rain excessively during the whole of the three days appointed for the races. This so startled the inhabitants, that even years after the event, it was a common saying,—“Old Grimshaw put a stop to the races by his prayers.” And it would seem he effectually “put a stop to the races,” for none have since been held there. This and other circumstances, gained him high respect, indeed a perfect veneration was experienced towards his person. His very appearance made the wicked flee, and frequently have pleasure-seekers on the Sabbath day, shunned his approach, as if he was armed with judicial authority.

His zeal for the Methodist cause scarce knew any bounds, and in addition to other striking manifestations of his benevolence, the liberality which he manifested for the cause at Haworth is peculiarly pre-eminent. Well knowing the little chance his parish would suffer, of having a successor who should feel a deep concern for the work of the Redeemer, he erected a Methodist Chapel, in that place, at his own entire expense; thus leaving a monument which shall perpetuate his zeal and religious philanthropy, far better than the marble tablet or the monumental pillar.

The pilgrimage, however, of this good and holy man drew to a close. After spending his days well,—after benefiting thousands of his fellow creatures,—after adorning the doctrine of God his Saviour in all things, he was seized with a malignant putrid fever, with which Haworth at that time was visited. After suffering excruciating agonies but exhibiting in the midst of all his

pains, calm and holy resignation, this bright,—this glowing luminary set in a sky, tinged with a radiancy of his own brightness. He died April 7th, 1763.

By his own desire, his remains were brought to Ewood. The burial field, (at Luddenden Church,) where his sacred ashes repose, is distant from Haworth some six or seven miles, and with such love did the whole neighbourhood venerate this man, that thousands from the surrounding country attended and followed his corpse to the grave. Many a pompous procession has there been to carry out the dead to the burial; conquerors with glittering trappings have gone to the tomb; and kings amid midnight show and funereal splendor, “the pomp and circumstance of woe,” have been consigned to their mother earth; but never was such heart-felt sorrow manifested as when the plain, unadorned train of mourners followed the body of Mr. Grimshaw to its grave; o’erlooking angels must have dropped a tear at such mortal grief;—the very air resounded with sighs and wailings, and as the procession moved mournfully over the hills, the ground was bedewed with tears. It was a touching scene! Each felt they had lost a father, a brother, a friend. I envy not the man whose soul does not echo Balaam’s sentiment:—“let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his.”

To bring the reader again to Halifax; it seems that in 1747 the ministrations of Mr. Grimshaw were more frequent, he not only visited the little united band of christians at Skircoat Green, but commenced preaching

in the wild district adjacent. It was remembered by several of the older members of methodist families in the vicinity, that Mr. Grimshaw used to visit the surrounding villages, collect the scattered inhabitants together, after their day's work, and preach to them. Joseph Boothroyd, the father of Mrs. Priestley, afterwards to be mentioned, used to help and assist to congregate the inhabitants of Norland, to listen to such services, and he particularly alluded to the plain and homely style of Mr. Grimshaw's preaching.

Among other places he frequently went over the hills to Ewood, where his son resided. He often preached there in the barn and other out-buildings. On one occasion he was accompanied by Whitfield to this place. Intelligence of their coming having been announced in the neighbourhood, an immense concourse was assembled. A temporary booth was erected in a field, near the house, for Mr. Whitfield and the other ministers. Not only the field, but the woody land above it, was covered with crowds of people collected from different parts. An unusual solemnity pervaded this vast multitude; and at the close of the service the 100th Psalm was sung, and concluded with Mr. Grimshaw's favorite doxology, "Praise God from whom all blessings flow." &c. The volume of sound produced by the united voices of thousands, while it re-echoed through the vale below, is said to have had such an effect as no language can describe.

The fact of Mr. Grimshaw being the recognized assistant of Mr. Wesley in this district, and therefore

the superintendant of the circuit which then included Skircoat Green and its adjacencies, having already been noticed, considerable information will be derived by the perusal of a few extracts from two or three published letters of Mr. Grimshaw's to Mr. Wesley; the first is from Haworth, and bears date May 30th, 1747.

I hope this will find you in good health, and at hard but happy-making labor. O may the Lord give you sufficient strength of soul and body, as well as find employment in his vineyard, to the end. The work, I hope, prospers well in all those parts. The societies you formed in William Darney's circuit, I hear are in a good state. I went amongst those about Todmorden, the week after you were there, and to my great comfort found it so. I likewise observed a general disposition in all sorts to hear the gospel. I exhorted twice that day, for I will not have it called preaching. I afterwards gave a short exhortation to a few, who happened to come too late to hear either of the former. I then took leave, and came away about seven in the evening. I lay that night at a friend's house, about six miles from Todmorden, in the road to Halifax. Next morning, about half a mile from thence, in the parish of Heptonstall, in which you also were; and in my way home, at a friend's house (to whom I had signified my intention two or three days before) I was met, praised be God, by a great multitude. The house was so full that one-third part, if not more, I think stood out of doors. I stood just within the door threshold, for the convenience of all. I exhorted near an hour and a half. The Lord gave me great freedom and power. These were as attentive, serious, and civil as those the day before.

Last Lord's day I received a letter from one Mr. Perronet, at Mrs. Holmes's, desiring to see me last Monday there, but I could not conveniently go. I suppose he is gone. However this week, I rode to Mrs. Holmes's, assuring her, with the Lord's leave, that I would next wait upon her. I hope we shall remember you with pleasure. I had Mr. Hutchinson and his sister, from Leeds, here

the last Lord's day. I hear a comfortable account from the Lord's people in those parts also. I hope you meet with all things well wherever you come. You will not fail to present my tender respects to your brother; the same I desire to all the sincere servants and seekers of the blessed Jesus, your redeemer and mine. O may we be kept faithful to him to the end; may we ever go forth in his strength, incessantly making mention, yea loudly proclaiming his righteousness only; indefatigably laboring to glorify him in our hearts, lips and lives, which are his, and continually endeavouring to bring innumerable sons and daughters to glory by him. This week two members of our society, a married man and woman, are gone to rest with this precious Lord. Blessed be his name.

The next letter from which an interesting quotation may very beneficially be extracted, is written from Ewood, and dated August, the same year. After hoping that success will follow all their exertions, he writes—

You will desire to know how I do. O, dear sir, hearty and happy in the Lord; and how my ministry, or rather the present state of my parish. Blessed be God, flourishing still more and more; our societies are in general very lively in the Lord; and several others, though not as yet joined in society, are nevertheless come to a sense of the pardoning love of God; others are under deep concern, or eagerly hungering and thirsting after our Redeemer. Two under my roof are just now under true conviction; one a girl about eighteen years old, and the other a boy about fourteen; and I hope my own little girl, between ten and eleven years old. It is near six months since she began to shew a serious concern for her sinful state.

The method which I, the least and most unworthy of my Lord's ministers, take in my parish, is this; I preach the gospel, glad tidings of salvation, to penitent sinners, through faith in Christ's blood only twice every Lord's day, the year round, (save when I expound the church catechism, and thirty nine articles, or read the Homilies, which in substance, I think my duty to do in some part of the year annually on the Lord's day mornings.)

I have found this practice, I bless God, of inexpressible benefit to my congregation, which consists, especially in the summer season, of perhaps ten or twelve hundred, or, as some think, many more souls. We have also prayers, and a chapter expounded every Lord's day evening. I visit my parish in twelve several places monthly, convening six, eight, or ten families in each place, allowing any people of the neighboring parishes that please to attend that exhortation. This I call my monthly visitation. I am now entering into the fifth year of it, and wonderfully, dear Sir, has the Lord blessed it. The only thing more are our funeral expositions or exhortations, and visiting our societies in one or other of the three last days of every month. This I purposed, through the grace of God, to make my constant business in my parish, so long as I live.

But I know not what to say; I know not what to do. Sometimes I have made more excursions into neighbouring parishes, to exhort, but always with a Nicodemical fear, and to the great offence of the clergy, which till lately, almost made me resolve to sally out no more, but content myself in my own bounds: till lately, I say; for on Wednesday was six weeks, from about five o'clock in the afternoon, to about twelve at night, and again for some hours together, I may say, the day following, my mind was deeply affected with strong impressions to preach the gospel abroad; the event I left to the Lord, fearing to be disobedient to what I trust, was the heavenly call. The first thing suggested to me, was, to visit Wm. Darney's societies; I accordingly met one of them about a month ago. Last week I struck out into Lancashire and Cheshire, Mr. Bennett bearing me company. We visited the societies in Rochdale, Manchester, and Holme, in Lancashire, and Booth Bank, in Cheshire. At the same time we made a visit to Mr. Carmichael, a clergyman at Tarvin, near Chester. He says, he received remission of sins last September; and, I believe preaches the same truth to his people.

"From thence we came back by Booth Bank to Manchester, visited the society a second time, and there we parted. I called and spent a part of two days with William Darney's societies

particularly those in Todmorden, Shore, Mellerbank, Rossendale, Bacup, Crosstone, Stonesheygate, Crimsworth Dean; every where the Lord was manifestly with us: great blessings were scattered, and much zeal and love, with great humility and simplicity, appeared in most people every-where. The whole visit found me employment for near five days. O it was a blessed journey to my soul! I now, in some measure, begin to see the import of our Lord's design, by that deep impression on my mind above mentioned. I am determined, therefore, to add, by the divine assistance, to the care of my own parish, that of so frequent a visitation of Mr. Bennett's, Wm. Darney's, the Leeds and Birstal societies, as my own convenience will permit, and their circumstances may respectively seem to require, all along eyeing the Lord's will and purposes for me. If I find the Lord's pleasure be, that I must launch out further, I will obey: for he daily convinces me more and more, what he has graciously done, and will do, for my soul. O! I can never do enough in gratitude and in love to him, for the least mite, if I may reverently so speak, of what his blessings are to me. O, dear sir, that I may prove faithful and indefatigable in his vineyard! that I may persevere to the last gasp steadfast, immoveable, and always abounding in his work!

What I purpose concerning surveying the abovesaid societies, as I have great cause to believe it is the Lord's will, from the freedom I feel thereto in my heart, so I question not but it will be agreeable to your conception of it. I desire to do nothing but in perfect harmony and concert with you, and therefore beg you will be entirely free, open, and communicative to me. I bless God, I can discover no other at present, but every way a perfect agreement between your sentiments, principles, &c. of religion and my own; and therefore desire you will, (as I do to you) from time to time, lay before me such rules, places, proposals, &c. as you conceive mostly conducive to the welfare of the church, the private benefit of her members, and in the whole to the glory of the Lord. My pulpit, I hope, shall be always at your's, and your brother's service, and my house, so long as I have one, your welcome home.

There is another letter written by Mr. Grimshaw, and dated Ewood, Novr. 27th, 1747, containing interesting information respecting the work of God in this neighbourhood. The reader is here presented with a short extract :—

Yours bearing date the 20th of this month, I yesterday received. I answer again, and by the length of my letter it will appear, I answer not in haste; though I must assure you, I have as little leisure for writing, as anything I do. The want of preachers here is very great. That the harvest in these parts is really large, and labourers but very few, is manifest: why it is so perhaps the Lord of it only knows. Indeed, you, in some sort, assign a reason for it. But dear Sir, are there such plenty of helpers in Cornwall? Send us one or two of them without further intreaty.

“You desire a particular account of the progress of the Lord’s work here. Indeed I have the pleasure of assuring you, that I think it never went better, from its appearance amongst us, than it has done within these two months. I may say, at Leeds, Birstal, Keighley, Todmorden, Rossendale, Heptonstall, Pendle-forest and in my own parish, the societies are very hearty, souls are daily added to the church, and I may say, multitudes on all sides, (many of whom have been enemies to us and our Master’s cause,) are convinced of the truth, run eagerly to hear the gospel, and (as I told you in my last) are continually crying out for more preachers. New and numerous classes have been lately joined. Were not matters thus with us, you may easily suppose, I should not be so urgent with you for assistance. I think my public exhortations (alias what I call my monthly visitations) in my parish were never so visibly blessed, I praise God, for these four years past, as they have been within these last two months. Such a mighty presence of God has been in those visitations, and also in many of our weekly class meetings, as I have rarely seen before. This evening I am venturing, by the divine assistance, upon a public exhortation in a wild, unchristian place, called Midgley,

four miles west from Halifax, where, of late, I have a great part of my residence; and I hope my attempt will have the Lord on my side.

I hope brother Bennet fails not to inform you, how well the work of God flourishes in Derbyshire, Cheshire, and in the south of Lancashire, particularly about Bolton, Chowbent, &c. Mr. Lunelle (whose wife has lately experienced the pardoning love of God) wrote me a delightful account of the state of the church at Leeds. Thus much of my incoherent relation of our Lord's work in these parts.

Brother Bennet, Nelson, and I, not only, I hope, love as brethren, but are cordially united in carrying on the Lord's work. I hope we believe, and profess, and preach one thing—Jesus and him crucified. If you know them, you know me. About three weeks since brothers Nelson and Colbeck were all night with me. Before then, I accidentally met with brother Bennet at Bank near Heptonstall, where I went to meet all the Heptonstall parish classes. Last week I met brother Colbeck, and all the Keighley parish classes; and about six weeks ago I visited those of Leeds and Birstal; about a month since those of Todmorden, Shore, and some of Rossendale.

Several places in the neighbourhood were favored about this time with the visits of Thomas Lee. He was born at a small village, in the parish of Keighley, in 1717. Being led to hear the powerful and searching ministry of Mr. Grimshaw, he became a converted man, and eventually commenced delivering discourses from passages of Scripture. Doubting his abilities and call to the work, he consulted with Mr. Grimshaw, who exhorted him "not to be faint or weary, but to go on valiantly to the work to which God had called him." Mr. Myles fixes 1748 as the date of his entering upon the work. The year before that he visited Harding

moor, Lingbopin near Wilsden, and Thornton near Bradford. These he selected as places where no one had ever preached before : his labors were blessed, a society was raised in each of them, and being thus encouraged he extended his ministrations and made more wide his circuit. At length he disposed of his business, bought a horse, and entered fully into the work. Mr. Grimshaw sent him into his circuit for about a month, to visit the societies over which he had superintendence.

In addition to the labors of those pious men already mentioned, Thomas Mitchell began to exhort the societies about this time. The ardent though unlettered zeal of this good man proved of essential service to this neighbourhood, and from a small tract entitled—*a short account of the Life of Mr. Thomas Mitchell*, London, 1781, the following particulars are extracted.

“I was born in the parish of Bingley, Yorkshire, Dec. 3rd, 1726. My parents both died in the faith. I lived with them seven years, and seven years more with an uncle, who was in the same parish. When I was turned four years old, my mother went one day to market, and left me to take care of the house and two younger children. She had not been gone long before I set the bed on fire. A neighbour seeing the smoke, and thinking the house was on fire, came with all speed to our assistance. In a short time she, with some others, extinguished the fire. Had it not been for this providential assistance, we might all have been burnt to death, for we had not sense to get out of the way. From five years old I had strong convictions at times,

and put up many prayers for mercy. And though I had no one to teach me, yet I had the fear of God in my heart. If I was overtaken in any sin, I was much troubled, till I had said my prayers, which I thought would make all up.

“At fourteen, I was bound ’prentice to a mason. While I lived with my master, I had little concern for my soul. But a few years after, at the time of the rebellion, I enlisted among the Yorkshire Blues. I continued with them about a year. There was one man among us, who had the fear of God before his eyes. He gave me good advice, which one time, in particular, took great effect upon me and my comrade. We both of us were under deep convictions, but knew not what to do to be saved. I began to fear death exceedingly, knowing I was not fit to die. These words followed me continually:—‘Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things, written in the book of the law to do them.’ I thought I must fulfil it; but I thought I grew worse and worse, till my load was many times heavier than I could bear.

“In the year 1746, the rebellion being over, we were discharged. I then sought for a people that feared God, and soon joined the Methodists. I heard John Nelson several times, and began to have some hope of finding mercy; some time after I went to hear Mr. Grimshaw, and was convinced that we are to be saved by faith; yea that the very worst of sinners might be saved, by faith in Jesus Christ. Soon after, I heard Mr. Charles Wesley preach from these words, ‘I am determined not to

know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ and him crucified.' He shewed clearly, that Christ is able and willing to save the greatest sinners. I was much refreshed under the sermon.

"But when he told us, we might know our sins forgiven in this life; yea this very moment, it seemed to me new doctrine, and I could not believe it at all. But I continued in prayer; and in a few days I was convinced of it to my great joy. The love of Christ broke into my soul, and drove away all guilt and fear: and at the same time he filled my heart with love both to God and man. I saw that God was my salvation, and could trust in him, and praise him with joyful lips.

"Soon after this, Mr. John Wesley came to Bradford, and preached on, 'This one thing I do.' He joined several of us together in a class, which met about a mile from the town. But all of them fell back and left me alone: yet afterward some of them returned. Before this, I thought my hill was so strong, that I could never be moved. But seeing so many fall into sin, I began to feel an evil heart of unbelief, and was fully convinced, that there must be a farther change in my heart, before I could be established in grace. Afterward I removed to Kighley, and had many opportunities of hearing and profiting by Mr. Grimshaw. But feeling my corruptions, with strong temptations, I fell into great doubtings. I was almost in despair. I could scarce pray at all, and was tempted to murder myself. One day, as I was going to hear Mr. Grimshaw, and going over a bridge, I was strongly tempted to leap into the

river; but the Lord had mercy upon me, and delivered me from this temptation. Yet still, I had many fears. I was in this state near half a year, finding no comfort in any thing. But one evening, one of our friends prayed in the society, and my soul was set at liberty. All my doubts fled away, and faith and love once more sprung up in my heart. I afterward saw, that God had a farther end in these trials and deliverances.

“Not long after this, I felt a great desire to tell others what God had done for my soul. I wanted my fellow creatures to turn to the Lord, but saw myself utterly unfit to speak for him. I saw the neighbourhood in which I lived, abounding with all manner of wickedness. And no man caring for their souls, or warning them to flee from the wrath to come. I began to reprove sin wherever I was, though many hated me for so doing. I did not regard that; for God gave me an invincible courage. But still I did not see clearly, Whether I was called to speak in public, or no. After many reasonings in my mind, I ventured to give notice of a meeting. When the time came, my soul was bowed down within me; my bones shaked, and one knee smote against the other. I had many to hear me: some of them heard with pain, as my gifts were very small, and advised me to speak no more in public. But one young woman was convinced of her lost condition, and never rested till she found redemption.

“But this did not satisfy my friends. So, as they were not willing to receive me, I went to those that would; and God began to bless my weak endeavors.

Yet I was not satisfied myself. For several weeks I had great trouble in my mind. I thought no man's case was like mine. Sometimes I wished I had never been born. Most of my friends were against me. I was full of fears within, and had a persecuting world without. But all this time my heart was drawn out in prayer, that God would shew me the way wherein I should go."

He then goes on to state the persecutions he sustained while laboring as a preacher, and in relating his journeyings from place to place, he says:—"From Leeds I went to Birstal. It happened to be their preaching night. John Nelson was sick in bed, so the people desired me to preach or give them a word of exhortation. Accordingly I preached in the best manner I could, and the people seemed well satisfied. The next day I went to High Town, and preached to a large congregation in the evening. I had much liberty in speaking, and found a great blessing to my own soul; and I have reason to believe that the people were well satisfied.

"From Birstal I went to Heptonstol. Here I met with a lively people who received me very kindly. I gave several exhortations among them, and the word went with power to many hearts. Among others, a very tall man, who was a butcher, was cut to the heart. But it had a very bad effect upon him for the present. For he went home and beat his wife in a most terrible manner, because he thought she had told me of all his sinful ways. But afterwards he was convinced and converted. I continued some time in these parts, and went

to several places in Lancashire. Here also I found many were awakened, and several found peace with God, while I was among them. I endeavoured to form a regular circuit in these parts, and in a little time gained my point.

“I continued here some time, and have reason to hope that I was useful among them. In one place I met with a mob of women, who put me into a pond of water, which took me nearly over my head. But by the blessing of God, I got out safe, and walked about three miles in my wet clothes, but I caught no cold. I continued some time in these parts, encouraged by the example and advice of good Mr. Grimshaw.

“One time Paul Greenwood and I called at his house together, and he gave us a very warm exhortation, which I shall not soon forget. He said, ‘If you are sent of God to preach the gospel, all hell will be up in arms against you. Prepare for the battle, and stand fast in the good ways of God. Indeed you must not expect to gain much of this world’s goods by preaching the gospel. What you get must come through the devil’s teeth; and he will hold it as fast as he can. I count every covetous man, to be one of the devil’s teeth. And he will let nothing go, for God and his cause, but what is forced from him.’” In the year 1751 he gave up his trade and entered fully into the work of the christian ministry, receiving an appointment in Lincolnshire.

CHAPTER IV.

Mr. Wesley preaches at the Market Cross, Halifax,—a serious disturbance breaks out. Conversion of James Riley, of Bradshaw,—he invites Mr. Grimshaw to preach at his house,—a class is formed. Letter of Mr. Wesley's respecting riots at Colne. He preaches at Heptonstall and Midgley. Chapel in Mount-Street. Titus Knight, Dan Taylor, Richard Smith, and Mr. Wood,—connection of Methodism with these characters. Extracts from an old society book. Mr. C. Hopper visits Halifax—anecdote. The Rev. G. Whitfield preaches there also,—extract from one of his letters.

WE now approach an interesting part of our subject; a long year (at least it was felt as such) had rolled away before the people at Skircoat Green were blessed with the ministry of Mr. Wesley. In 1748, (Aug. 22nd,) we find him preaching to this small society; when it was determined he should again preach at Halifax; accordingly Mr. Wesley came to the town along with his friends. A discussion arose as to the most eligible place for him to occupy; the market cross was mentioned, as the most public, but for that very reason an objection was raised. Many of my readers will remember that the old market cross formerly stood upon a scite in the present street, called Old Market Place. However the venerable apostle went to the cross, being

not ashamed of the gospel of Christ. The circumstance of his going to preach spread an alarm through the town and the whole place was speedily in an uproar.

Mr. W. gives the following account of the service ; “there was an immense number of people, roaring like the waves of the sea, but the far greater part of them were still, and as soon as I began to speak, they seemed more and more attentive, till a gentleman got some of the rabble together and began to throw money among them, which occasioned much hurry and confusion. Finding my voice could not be heard, I made signs to the people that I would remove to another place. I believe nine in ten followed me to a meadow, about half a mile from the town, where we spent so solemn an hour I have seldom known, rejoicing and praising God.”

The writer had a somewhat particular account afforded him of the circumstance just narrated, from which it appears the disturbance was of a most uproarious description ; Mr. Wesley was besmeared with dirt thrown upon him by the mob, and one of the exasperated party aimed a stone with such precision as to hit Mr. W. on the cheek, making a deep incision thereby and from which the blood trickled down his face. It was then that he made signs to the people to remove to another place, and they accordingly adjourned to a meadow near Salterhebble.

Mr. Wesley preached in the town at five o'clock the following morning, and though at such an early hour to a larger congregation than had assembled the preceding day.

Among the characters mingled in the crowd at the market cross was James Riley, of Bradshaw; curiosity had led him to the place, and there he received his first religious impressions. Being now introduced to a new state of feeling and experience, he was induced to attend Haworth church the Sunday following; here he heard a sermon exactly adapted to his circumstances, from *the Lord whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple*. Under this sermon the Lord revealed himself as his pardoning God and friend. Feeling anxious that others should be happy as himself, he invited his neighbours to accompany him to Haworth: by his earnest solicitations he prevailed upon John Bates, Jonas Varley, and Luke Shaw, and they continued to attend the ministry of Mr. Grimshaw, till the little group became augmented to a considerable number.

Shortly after the conversion of James Riley he invited Mr. Grimshaw to preach at his house in Bradshaw. The assembled congregation was very numerous, many of whom placed themselves in a somewhat novel and singular situation. Young people, at that day, were timid and afraid of being seen at such meetings or preachings, but a general interest being excited in the neighbourhood, no inconsiderable number of young people were induced to attend, and to avoid recognition they adopted the peculiar expedient of ascending several large trees which then flourished around Riley's residence; amid the thick foliage of these trees they heard the word with profit. Lay preachers were next invited, and thus James Riley's house became a regular

preaching place. A class was formed at the house of John Bates, over which James Riley was appointed leader, the first members being John Bates, Luke Shaw, Thomas Bates, John Coates, John Parker, and Hannah Hodgson. I have an account of Bradshaw being visited by John Nelson, but am unable to give the precise date.

The reader will feel an interest in tracing the steps of Mr. Wesley to Colne, from whence he returns again into this neighbourhood. "Thursday 25th, I rode with Mr. Grimshaw to Rough-lee, where T. Colbeck, of Keighley was to meet us. We were stopt again and again, and begged 'not to go on, for a large mob from Colne was gone before us.' Coming a little farther, we understood they had not yet reached Rough-lee. So we hastened on that we might be before them. All was quiet when we came. I was a little afraid for Mr. Grimshaw, but needed not; he was ready to go to prison or death for Christ's sake.

"At half an hour after twelve I began to preach. I had about half finished my discourse when the mob came pouring down the hill like a torrent. After exchanging a few words with their captain to prevent any contest, I went with him as he required. When we came to Barrowford, two miles off, the whole army drew up in battle array before the house in which I was carried, with two or three of my friends. After I had been detained above an hour, their captain went out and I followed him, and desired him to conduct me whence I came. He said, he would; but the mob soon

followed after ; at which he was so much enraged, that he must needs turn back to fight them, and so left me alone."

A further account of this riot is contained in a letter which Mr. Wesley wrote the following morning to one closely connected with the whole affair.

Widdop, August 26th, 1748.

Sir,

Yesterday, between twelve and one o'clock, while I was speaking to some quiet people, without any noise or tumult, a drunken rabble came, with clubs and staves, in a tumultuous and riotous manner, the captain of whom, Richard B—— by name, said he was a deputy constable, and that he was come to bring me to you. I went with him. But I had scarce gone ten yards, when a man of his company struck me with his fist in the face with all his might. Quickly after another threw his stick at my head. I then made a little stand. But another of your champions, cursing and swearing in the most shocking manner, and flourishing his club over his head, cried out—"bring him away."

With such a convoy I walked to Barrowford, where they informed me you was, their drummer going before, to draw all the rabble together from all quarters.

When your deputy had brought me into the house, he permitted Mr. Grimshaw, the minister of Haworth, Mr. Colbeck of Keighley, and one more to be with me, promising that none should hurt them. Soon after, you and your friends came in and required me to promise 'I would come to Rough-lee no more.' I told you, I would sooner cut off my hand, than make any such promise. Neither would I promise that none of my friends should come. After abundance of rambling discourse, (for I could keep none of you long to any one point,) from about one o'clock till between three and four, (in which one of you frankly said, "no, we will not be like Gamaliel; we will proceed like the Jews,") you seemed a little satisfied with my saying, "I will not preach at

Roughlee at this time." You then undertook to quiet the mob, to whom you went and spoke a few words, and their noise immediately ceased. I then walked out with you at the back door.

I should have mentioned, that I had several times before desired you to let me go, but in vain; and that when I attempted to go with Richard B. the mob immediately followed, with oaths, curses, and stones: that one of them beat me down to the ground; and when I rose again, the whole body came about me like lions and forced me back into the house.

While you and I went out at one door, Mr. Grimshaw and Mr. Colbeck went out at the other. The mob immediately closed them in, tossed them to and fro with the utmost violence, threw Mr. Grimshaw down, and loaded them both with dirt and mire of every kind: not one of your friends offering to call off your blood hounds from the pursuit.

The other quiet, harmless people who followed me at a distance to see what the end would be, they treated still worse, not only by the connivance but by the express order of your deputy. They made them run for their lives, amidst showers of dirt and stones, without any regard to age or sex. Some of them they trampled in the mire, and dragged by the hair, particularly Mr. Mackford, who came with me from Newcastle. Many they beat without mercy. One they forced to leap down, (or they would have thrown him headlong) from a rock, ten or twelve feet high into the river. And when he crawled out, wet and bruised, they swore they would throw him in again, which they were hardly persuaded not to do. All this time you sat well pleased close to the place, not attempting in the least to hinder them. And all this time you were talking of justice and law! Alas, Sir, suppose we were Dissenters, (*which I deny*) suppose we were Jews or Turks, are we not to have the benefit of the laws of our country? Proceed against us by the law if you can or dare; but not by lawless violence: not by making a drunken, cursing, swearing, riotous mob, both judge, jury, and executioner: this is flat rebellion against God and the King, as you may possibly find to your cost.

It must be stated that the church minister at Colne, the Rev. George White, A. M. had exhibited the most bitter malignity towards the Methodists. I have not space or inclination to enter into a delineation of his character, therefore must content myself with making an assertion which is fully substantiated by his conduct,—that he was a concentration of the most glaring inconsistencies and absurdities ever beheld in a mortal. Finding that a tirade of abuse, which he called a sermon, had not the effect of extirpating the Methodists by its publication, he resorted to a more summary mode. Being aware of Mr. Wesley's presence in the neighbourhood, he issued a proclamation, calling upon the inhabitants to enlist under his command, for the defence of the church, &c. After he had collected together his army, and plied them well with ale, he advanced, Jack-the-giant-killer-like, and * * * * * but the reader has already been made acquainted with the proceedings of this mob. The Rev. George White instigated the whole affair, and to him it is suspected the foregoing letter was written.

Mr. Wesley proceeded to Heptonstall, and in contrast with what transpired at Barrowford, let the conduct of the congregation be noticed. "The place in which I preached was an oval spot of ground, surrounded with spreading trees, scooped out, as it were, in the side of the hill, which rose round like a theatre. The congregation was equal to that at Leeds; but such serious and earnest attention! It lifted up my hands, so that I preached as I scarce never did in my life."

From Heptonstall he proceeded to Midgley, a place in which Mr. Grimshaw had previously sown the seed of life. Many flocked from all parts to hear Mr. Wesley, and the evening being fine and calm, he preached in the open air till near an hour after sunset. From thence he proceeded into Lancashire.

I am sorry to be unable to state the precise year wherein preachings, were established in the town of Halifax, though the conjecture is pretty strong, that about the period of Mr. Wesley's visit just mentioned, there would be the establishment of these forerunners to a regular society. It had long been anticipated by the society at Skircoat Green to have a branch at Halifax, and no doubt they had made considerable exertions to that effect, so that when the noted circumstance transpired of Mr. Wesley preaching at the market cross, we have reasonable grounds to suppose, that the seeds of the present vast and extensive society would then be sown, though antecedent to that, it would seem a few friends resided in the town friendly to the cause. It is to be regretted that the formation of the first society in Halifax is involved in much obscurity: nevertheless, about this time, (1749) the Methodists occupied a building which had been used by the society of friends as a meeting house, and stood upon the scite now occupied by the buildings on the North side of Mount-Street. This building was a curious and ancient erection, and ascended to by a flight of stone steps. It was the lowermost of a pile of old buildings forming what was called "Quaker's fold,"

from the fact probably of that sect having for a considerable period had possession of the beforementioned premises. The house was subsequently occupied by Joseph Jenkinson, a pious and devoted Methodist, and used by him as a pressing shop; his son, Jonathan Jenkinson, for a series of years maintained a blameless profession, proved his attachment to Methodism, and within the recollection of many of my readers, died as he had lived.

Whether during the proceedings when "the town was in an uproar," and "the people roaring like waves of the sea," or not, but at least shortly after, there was a remarkable conversion in the person of a collier—Titus Knight; and as he will form a conspicuous object in a future page of this work, it may be deemed proper to add a few additional remarks.

He was a man possessed of fine and commanding abilities, and, though in a humble situation, sustained a character free from any stain or blemish. From early life he had discovered a taste for reading, and indulged his appetite for books, so far as his contracted circumstances would admit. On Mr. Wesley again visiting Halifax, he perceived the superiority of Titus Knight's abilities, and feeling concerned for his welfare, proposed his emerging from the pit, and gaining a livelihood in a manner more suited to the capacities of his mind. In accordance with these suggestions, and the offer of the use of the room adjoining the chapel hereafter to be noticed, Titus commenced a preparatory school for education. The scheme answered, and the schoolmaster was not only

able to maintain a numerous family, but his strong and respectable talents having now extensive scope for exercise, were considerably improved; in fact he became a noted character and commenced the career of a local preacher. The unfortunate circumstance of the separation of this talented individual from the people to whom he owed his all, will be noted in due course.

After his secession from the Wesleyans, he became an acceptable and much-esteemed minister amongst the Independents. A small chapel was built for him on the South side of Jail-lane in Halifax, this place becoming too small for his congregation, it was converted into two dwelling-houses, and the handsome and spacious structure called "Square Chapel" was erected, (the cost of which was raised by voluntary subscription) and opened in 1773. At this chapel he continued as the stated pastor, until his death in 1793. During the greater part of his pastorate he annually visited London, to supply the pulpits of the Tabernacle and Tottenham Court Chapel. He obtained considerable eminence and enjoyed through life a deserved popularity, and his name and character are still held in veneration by that numerous and respectable body of christians of whom he was the first minister in Halifax.

It may not be improper to mention that the late Rev. S. Knight, A. M., vicar of Halifax, was a son of the Rev. Titus Knight, in whose preparatory school, the vicar and his brother received the rudiments of their education. What human mind could have conceived that the converted collier, would not merely have risen

to such eminence himself, but that one of his sons should afterwards become vicar of Halifax, respected and had in veneration by his parishioners; another an eminent surgeon, and a third a talented and respectable dissenting minister?

Subsequently to this, there was a remarkable conversion in the person of one Dan Taylor, who labored conjointly with Titus Knight, as a collier, in the same pit! Taylor continued for some time a consistent and honorable member of the Methodist society, but on account of some difference with respect to the ordinances of the gospel, he seceded from the connexion. Having shewn himself a man possessing considerable talent, he received an invitation from a number of people at Wadsworth, and eventually became their pastor. During the summer months, having no better accommodation, he preached in the open air. Being possessed of an intrepid courage and persevering diligence, he was as little disturbed by the wildness of the country, as by the roughness of the inhabitants, or the little prospect of adequate means of support. Nevertheless, in course of time, his friends took a small house in Wadsworth Lanes, and the congregation gradually augmenting, a place of worship was erected at Birchcliffe, near Hebden Bridge. The popularity of the Rev. Dan Taylor continued to increase; he removed to Halifax, where his usefulness was manifested in the flourishing congregation which attended his ministry at Haley Hill. He subsequently removed to London, where he ended his days.

We have previously hinted at the direct as well as collateral advantages arising from the spread of Methodism in this parish. The reader, in the preceding pages has had ample proof in verification of this statement, already has he seen two distinguished individuals nurtured by the Methodist body. The one became the founder of the present congregation of Independents in the town of Halifax: and the General Baptists, though not a very numerous body in this Parish, date their origin with the Rev. Dan Taylor.

And while we are upon this subject, it is interesting to record, that the Particular Baptist interest, in this parish, (first established at Wainsgate,) may be considered as the result of the labors of Mr. Grimshaw. The first pastor of the ancient Baptist church at Wainsgate, was Mr. Richard Smith. In the former part of his life he attended the ministry of Mr. Grimshaw, under whom his conversion seems to have taken place. The following particulars respecting Mr. Smith, are extracted from the Life of Dr. Fawcett, of Ewood Hall.

“Being possessed of strong natural powers, and diligent in his application to study, it was the general opinion of his religious friends that he was designed for public usefulness in the church of God. He was accordingly solicited, and at length prevailed upon to give a word of exhortation. This he did at first privately, and afterward in larger assemblies. His efforts were rendered acceptable and useful to many.

“After some time he was invited to preach in the

township of Wadsworth, then a wild and inhospitable part of the country, where civilization was in a low state, and where there was little of the fear or knowledge of God. Mr. Smith preached in the houses of those who were willing to receive him. The number of hearers gradually increased; and though some contradicted and blasphemed, many believed and turned to the Lord.

“As an evidence that the power of Divine grace had reached the hearts of many individuals, and that they were attached to the ministry of Mr. Smith, they entered into voluntary subscriptions, and without soliciting assistance from any other quarter, erected a small meeting-house, which they called Wainsgate from the farm on which it was built, in a high situation, without any considerable village near it. The proprietor of the farm, being a warm friend to the cause, gave the ground for the place of worship and for a burying place adjoining.”

Though the place of worship thus erected was situated in a mountainous district, and on the verge of an extensive moor, yet in this secluded spot a christian church was gathered and constituted in the year 1750, and inconsiderable as it may appear, it was the mother church to many others in the neighbouring towns and villages.

The Rev. Mr. Wood, who for some time was minister of the infant Baptist church in Halifax, also owed his conversion to the Methodists. He was a member of society, till upon the differences of Mr. Wesley and

Mr. Whitfield, he was induced to leave the connexion. After this he became the pastor of a congregation at Wakefield, but a change taking place in his views with respect to Baptism, and the infant church in Chapel-town, Halifax, being destitute of a minister, he settled amongst them.

Thus the Methodists have been connected with the opening prospects of three distinct churches in Halifax who differ from her in point of doctrine. It would be difficult, as we have heretofore hinted, to follow the stream which burst forth so nobly, and behold amid its varied windings the mighty benefits it has produced ; eternity alone will unravel the blessings afforded, not merely to this district, but, to the world by Methodism. Writers in the establishment as well as among dissenters equally admit that at the time when Wesley and Whitfield arose to bless mankind, christianity was but a lifeless body—a statue, beautifully proportioned, its features admirably delineated, its symmetry fine and commanding, but nothing more—it breathed not. For a succession of years the ministers of our holy religion had been more distinguished by their learning than by that primitive simplicity and holy fervour which are no less necessary to a faithful discharge of the trust reposed in them, as dispensers of the oracles of God. Nay, and I now quote the language of an eminent author,—“in the commencement of that revival of religion, there were, if the writer’s information is correct, but two clergymen resident in this part of the kingdom, who avowedly embraced, and preached the sentiments ge-

nerally termed evangelical; namely, the Rev. Mr. Grimshaw and the Rev. Mr. Venn, of Huddersfield." But a change came o'er the scene, and a spirit of religion was awakened in a church which needed something to rouse it. But it did not rest here, the church which Mr. Wesley formed numbered many strong-minded hard-thinking men, who, when membership with the establishment was urged, could not conscientiously remain in society. They did not however discover any hostile feelings towards the church from which they seceded, while not a few displayed abilities which have since gained the love, the admiration, the esteem of christian communities. New churches were thus established, and already have we seen Methodism at the root of all the dissenting congregations in the town and several of those in the neighbourhood, (with the exception of the old presbyterian chapel in Northgate, erected about 1697, and the society of friends.) With the rise of other denominations who style themselves Methodists, we shall be made acquainted, while pursuing our enquiries.

During the infancy of the society in Halifax, the services of Titus Knight were found of essential benefit, and he soon gained the affections and good wishes of the whole society. Mr. Grimshaw, as we have before stated, seems to have kept a watchful eye over the cause in this neighbourhood, and in an old society book, originally kept by him, there is a scrap of paper pinned to a leaf, bearing the following memorandum in the hand-writing of Mr. Grimshaw, "April

19th, 1749, lent the brethren at Halifax, £1. 10s. 6d. July 11th, 1749, given to Halifax society towards defraying the law charge, £1. 10s. 6d." What "law charge" is here referred to, I have no means of ascertaining; but it appears the funds of the society were at such a low ebb as to induce Mr. Grimshaw to write the additional item "*given to Halifax society &c.*" having little hope, I suppose, of crediting the receipt of his former loan.

The book to which reference has been made, is at present in the hands of the superintendent preacher of the Keighley circuit, and was kindly shewn to the writer by the Rev. Robert Heys. It is an interesting book, and was kept by Mr. Grimshaw; among other singular entries pointed out are,—“Jan. 10th, 1748, a pair of boots for Wm. Darney, 14s.—Oct. 23rd, 1755, Paid for Jonathan Maskew's shirts and stockings, 14s. 10d. To Jonathan Maskew's hat, 5s.—July 22nd, 1756, To two shirts for Jonathan Maskew, 13s. to three cravats for ditto, 3s. to pumps, 6s. to stockings, 3s. 6d.—Oct. 21st, 1756, To Jonathan Maskew's coat, £1. 12s. 6d., to William Parker, for Jonathan Maskew's stocks, 4s. 9d. to Jonathan Maskew's coat making, 4s. 6d. to ditto for Gamash's, 7s. 6d.—April 1782, A pair of shoes for Mr. Wesley.” There is also a memorandum made of a meeting, held in October, 1748, at Todmorden Edge, when stewards for the societies at Rossendale, Roughlee, Heptonstall, Todmorden, &c. were chosen for conducting the temporalities of the several societies with whose monies they were entrust-

ed. "It was then agreed, (says Mr. Grimshaw,) that if there be any just cause to exchange any of the above stewards, it shall be done at the next quarterly meeting held for the said societies, by the approbation of the leaders then present, *Note*, if any dispute arise touching the choosing of a steward or stewards, the greater number of voices shall have the choice to elect a fresh steward. This shall be mentioned to our minister, Mr. John Wesley, or his successor, who shall end any dispute of this kind."

It was during 1749 that Mr. Christopher Hopper visited Yorkshire. "I preached at Birstal on the top of the hill, before the foundation of the preaching house was laid. Large congregations attended, and the power of the Lord was present to heal. I rode on to Halifax and found their little society at Skircoat Green. God gave us a blessing. I then rode on to Rochdale, and preached in the evening, at the widow Whitaker's, to as many as the house could contain. They were turbulent enough, but we were not afraid, for God was with us."

Connecting this extract from Mr. Hopper's Diary, with a pleasing statement he made at a subsequent period of his life, during a discourse preached in the chapel at Church-lane, the reader will have a picture presented to his mind of the state and extent of Methodism in these parts during 1749. Suddenly making a pause in the sermon to which allusion has just been made, and looking upon the noble congregation then assembled, "I have a fine chapel to preach in now

(he said,) but it was not always so. I remember the time, when I rode into Halifax, where having alighted and seeing some men stand by, I said,—‘are there any Methodists here?’ ‘No,’ they answered with evident satisfaction. At length however an old man came up, and said, ‘there’s a man at Skircoat Green, of the name of Kershaw, I don’t know what he is, but he prays under the rocks.’ That’s the man I want, I said, and so I rode down among the rocks at Skircoat-Green, and preached to the family there.” Then, raising his voice Mr. Hopper enquired,—“Do you want to know which is the mother church? Skircoat Green, I answer is the mother church to Halifax.” He added, with a little pleasantry, “I had to ride sixteen miles before I met with another Methodist, and he was in a *cellar* at Rochdale; then I rode eleven miles before I met with another, and he was in a *garret* at Manchester. But now, what hath God wrought?”

Towards the close of the year 1749, Halifax was favored with the labors of the Rev. G. Whitfield, while on his return from a tour in the North. He was in Halifax on the 25th of October, and upon his arrival at Leeds he wrote a letter to lady Huntingdon, wherein he mentions his visit. The effect which was produced by the ministry of this powerful preacher tended much to the benefit of the people, and made some compensation for the absence of Mr. Wesley.

It may be interesting to quote a paragraph from the works of Mr. Whitfield, having relation to an individual whose name has been frequently mentioned in the

present history. The paragraph in question is from a letter, dated London, Dec. 19th : he says, "for near three months I have preached in many places, and thousands and ten thousands flocked to hear the glorious gospel. I have since had repeated letters of the impressions abiding upon the heart of many. Not unto me, not unto me, O Lord, but unto thy free grace be all the glory ! At Haworth I met with William Davy [Darney,] who has since been imprisoned for preaching. Though he is seemingly unqualified, yet I meet with many that date their awakening from their first hearing him. What shall we say to these things ? Even so, Father, for it seemeth good in thy sight ! I think he belongs to our Lord's family ; and therefore what is done for him, he will take as done to himself." Wm. Darney's imprisonment serves to shew the justice and mercy which was dealt out by the magistracy, and those in authority, to the early Methodist preachers. John Nelson's case has not yet escaped the recollection of the reader.

CHAPTER V.

Mr. Wesley in the neighbourhood in 1752—visits Heptonstall—privations to which he was subject. Erection of the first Methodist Chapel in Halifax. William Greenwood—his liberality. Mr. Whitfield again visits Halifax. Allusion to Mrs. Priestley—Dr. Fawcett. 1757, Mr. Wesley in Halifax—earthquake in the neighbourhood. James Parker, Isaac Wade, &c.—they establish prayer meetings. Stainland—the “old chapel.” Painful state of things in 1762—separation of Titus Knight. Rev. James Crossley—state of the society in 1763.

NOTHING of particular interest appears to have transpired, sufficient to arrest our progress, till 1752, when we find Mr. Wesley again in the neighbourhood. He preached at Birstal, April 5th, and thus notes the circumstance in his journal, “at one o’clock I preached at Birstal; observing that several sat on the side of the opposite hill, I afterward desired one to measure the ground, and we found it seven score yards from the place where I stood, yet the people heard perfectly well though I did not think any human voice would have reached so far.” Mr. Wesley generally preached at this place on his future visits to Birstal, in fact it was his favorite spot, and would be on such an occasion as this, when the venerable and holy man held forth the word of truth, one of the most lovely scenes our imagination could picture.

An aged saint afforded the writer several interesting anecdotes respecting the services he attended when Mr. Wesley officiated, and particularly referred to his mien and appearance, clothed in surplice and banns, his silvered locks flowing around his neck. The effect produced upon the congregation by his appearance was surprising, and no sooner would he commence his sermon, than every eye involuntarily gazed with fixed attention upon the holy man of God. "In fact" said my informant, "if you once fixed your eye upon him, you could not take it off again."* His musical voice conveyed the word with such power and effect, that seldom was a sermon heard without the heart being touched, mellowed, and affected. The voice of Mr. Wesley was not so strong as it was fine, clear, and distinct, so much so, that even amid a multitude of quiet hearers, and at the distance of one hundred and forty yards, persons, we find, heard and understood the sounds of his voice. On Wednesday, the 8th, Mr. Wesley rode to Hep-

* In farther illustration of the effect of Mr. Wesley's ministry upon a congregation, the following anecdote, concerning a scotchwoman, may be deemed interesting; at the time Mr. Wesley preached at Cambuslang, in Scotland, great crowds of people went from Glasgow to hear him, and the wondrous effects of his eloquence are even yet remembered. Such was the sympathetic effect produced, that his congregation were frequently drowned in tears, crying and groaning aloud for the state they were in, and lamenting the crimes of which they had been guilty. An old lady, who was visited with the desire of hearing this wondrous man went out to hear him, and she also was dissolved in tears. On her return, she was questioned by an acquaintance as to the cause of this: on which she said that she heard nothing in his preaching to cause her to shed tears; but when she looked round, "and saw every ane greetin, she thought what a hardened heart she must ha'e, compared with the rest; and when she reflected on that, she grat, (she said) because she couldna greet."

tonstall, where he preached amid considerable opposition, arising from no other source than the inmates of the clergyman's house. The tumult began in the person of a captain, who strove (but happily in vain,) to arrest the entire attention of the congregation. In mercy the Lord visited this babbler, and the impressions made upon his mind were doubtless beneficial in their tendencies. When Mr. Wesley was in the neighbourhood, in June following, he visited Heptonstall, where his ministry was again subject to interruption. An attorney, (who chanced to be in the town,) in order to prove himself a rival of the preacher, commenced in a very audible voice relating a parcel of nonsense in the shape of a story; of this Mr. Wesley took no notice, nor was the congregation disturbed by such marvellous narrations. The unruly limb of the law, however, uplifting his voice, persisted in his oration; but some of the people, beginning to be annoyed by it, very quietly got rid of the nuisance, by carrying him out of the congregation. They then heard with profit the sermon. Mr. Wesley was struck with their conduct and made a memorandum of the manner in which they disposed of the garrulous lawyer.

It will give the reader an insight of the hardships and privations which the early Methodist preachers underwent, if we refer to Mr. Wesley's journal of his visit to Heptonstall as just related. The following morning he preached at Ewood, and then rode forward to Todmorden, where he preached on the side of the hill, (the scite was subsequently occupied by a chapel,) he then

proceeded to Mellar barn, where he lodged during the night. Here is a picture ! “My lodging was not such as I would have chosen ; but what providence chooses is always good. My bed was considerably underground, the room serving both for a bed chamber and a cellar. The closeness was far more troublesome at first than the coolness. But I let in a little fresh air by breaking a pane of paper, (which was by the way of glass,) in the window, and then slept sound till morning.”

The reader has now arrived at an interesting era of our history. He has been accustomed to notice the early preachers as performing their holy functions either in the open air or in private houses ; a building entirely devoted to sacred purposes was not yet possessed by the Methodists in the neighbourhood with which we are concerned. I am aware of the room already alluded to, in Mount Street, but in all probability this was occupied by some tenant on the week day ; be this as it may, the place became too small for the increased congregation, and a new preaching house, or chapel, was found indispensable.

A barrier however opposed their progress,—an usual impediment which the zeal of the early Methodists had frequently to surmount—poverty. A way was opened, the case became known to Mr. Grimshaw, and that pious character, whose laudable zeal and generosity is here mentioned not for the first time, nobly came forward and made a liberal advance of money, which together with a sum lent by Mr. William Greenwood, of Mixenden, amounted to £300. A plot of ground, in

Church Lane, was purchased of Wm. Prescott, Esq. of Clare Hall, and the building forthwith proceeded. It was opened in 1752. The preaching house was made over to six trustees, Titus Knight, Thomas Dickenson, Richard Booth, Blakey Spencer, Jeremiah Swift, and John Hallowell. And for a certain period the chapel was consigned to the above mentioned persons who had advanced the money, by way of security.

A small gallery was erected on one side of the chapel, and the whole formed a comfortable place of worship, measuring on the outside fourteen yards by ten. The structure was not underdrawn, the funds not allowing it, which occasionally put the congregation to inconvenience. This chapel has since been converted into cottages, in one of which Mr. J. Saville resides.

On the east side of the chapel was a dwellinghouse, which for some time was occupied by Titus Knight. As yet a travelling preacher did not reside at Halifax, but accommodation was afforded for one while he remained a night in the town, on his round through the circuit. John Hallowell lived there for several years, that the wants of the preachers might be properly attended to.

With respect to the individual whose name occurs in honorable relation with that of the Rev. Mr. Grimshaw, the writer was unable for some time to arrive at any certain information relative to his character and connection with the church. It seems however that his house had been opened for the Methodist preachers, and also that he preached occasionally himself. To the

cause he was a warm hearted friend, and having a small competency, he willingly made the advance already mentioned.

I have certain information of Mr. Hopper preaching at Wm. Greenwood's, but am unable to affix any precise date. During one of his visits the constable of Ovensden, with a small band of selected men, came to the preaching with the full intent of making him prisoner. Shaking his staff in the face of the preacher, he used violent and abusive language, threatening to force him away. Mr. H. besought the disturbers to remain silent till the close of the sermon, and then, if needs were, he would go with them. They did so, listening with apparent interest to the discourse, and then slunk away.

During this year Mr. Whitfield ministered in Halifax, and there is a traditionary account of his preaching in the open air at Wards' End. From Sheffield he writes thus to a friend;—"Nov. 1st. Since I left Newcastle, I have scarce known sometimes whether I have been in heaven or on earth. At Leeds, Birstal, Haworth, Halifax, &c. thousands and thousands have flocked twice or thrice a day to hear the word of life. I am now come from Bolton, Manchester, Stockport, and Chinley. Yesterday, I preached in a church. Four ordained ministers, friends to the work of God, have been with me. The word hath run so swiftly at Leeds, that friends have come to fetch me back, and I am now going to Rotherham, Wakefield, Leeds, York, and Epworth. God favors us with weather; and I would fain make hay whilst the sun shines. O that I had as many tongues as there are

hairs upon my head! the ever-loving, ever-lovely Jesus should have them all! Fain would I die preaching!"

Mr. Wesley made another tour to the North, in the year 1753, which embraced Heptonstall; concerning his visit to this romantic village, he writes—"Wednesday, June 30th, I rode to Haworth, where Mr. Grimshaw read prayers, and I preached to a crowded congregation; but, having preached ten or twelve times in three days, besides meeting the societies, my voice began to fail; not that I was hoarse at all, but my strength began to fail; however, it was restored at Heptonstall in the afternoon, so that the whole congregation could hear." He likewise adds this remark to the foregoing "when shall we learn to take thought only for the present hour; is it not enough if God gives strength when we want it." Mr. Wesley does not appear to have included Halifax in his route, though it may be strongly and reasonably conjectured, that from the fact of the new chapel being so recently erected in the town, he would favor the society with his ministrations.

It seems that about this period Methodism having won its way to Illingworth, Mrs. Priestley, the mother of the late Mr. Isaac Priestley, of Halifax, became a somewhat conspicuous member of the society. From what can be gathered concerning this pious woman, we learn she was born in Mixenden, in 1720, and during the early part of her life became a subject of the strivings of the spirit; but it was not till she had sat under the powerful ministry of Mr. Grimshaw, that she was brought to a lasting concern for her eternal welfare.

Unhappily she had to suffer considerable persecution, arising principally from her relatives and friends, yet amid all her conflicts she was enabled to ride "o'er tumult's waves unmoved." About 1753 she was invited to hear a Methodist preacher (I have sufficient reasons for supposing) at William Greenwood's. Concerning this sect she had heard much said, and while proceeding to the house where the preaching was held, her prayer was, that the Lord would give her some satisfactory evidence that they were God's people. Her prayer was answered in the salvation of her soul, and she united herself to these derided and persecuted christians, her bond of affection remaining unshaken 'till death. In conjunction with other friends she invited the preachers to Illingworth, and opened her house for their reception. As usual, persecution and affliction followed, and to no small extent did man prove the wickedness of his heart in endeavouring to check,—to baffle their endeavors. Nevertheless they received great encouragement, the small society was increased, and in spite of the blasts of persecution the good seed grew and bore much fruit. In addition to the class at John Bates's, one was formed at James Riley's, and subsequently another at Holdsworth, Luke Shaw being appointed leader.

Illingworth in the course of a few years suffered the loss of Mrs. Priestley, in her removal to Norland; she took with her a zealous heart, warm affection, and a soul burning with love to God. No sooner did her family settle in Norland, than she invited the preachers to that quarter; her house was opened for them, and

she soon reaped the benefits of church communion.

Thus was this pious woman rendered an instrument of much good in two important places in this neighbourhood. Having suffered the loss of her husband, she was induced to remove to Halifax with her son, where for many years she exemplified by her life and conduct the pleasing traits of a christian's character. In 1802 she was seized with a serious illness, and though the enemy made strong and repeated attacks upon her peace—though she had to fight with a powerful foe,—and grapple hard with death, she overcame. Some twelve hours prior to her decease, Satan appeared entirely bruised under her feet, and she repeatedly evinced overwhelming feelings of joy. Shortly before her death she requested to have a hymn read; it was done, and she added, "Amen, glory to God!" These were her last words; death's blast blew o'er her frame—she composedly took up her handkerchief, wiped away the cold, damp sweat which gathered on her brow, then laid her hands across her breast, closed her eyes, and sweetly fell asleep in Jesus.

Mr. Wesley did not visit the societies in the north between 1753 and 1755. In the interim Mr. Thomas Lee labored a year in the Birstal and Leeds circuit. In a memoir of himself he observes:—"About this time I had thirteen places where I preached at regularly. And I thought only of spending my life among them, when Mr. Grimshaw mentioned me to you. (Mr. Wesley.) You sent for me, and asked 'Whether I was willing to be a travelling preacher?' I said, yes, if Mr. Grimshaw

would supply my places, which he promised to do. That year I was most in the Birstal and Leeds circuit ; the next in the Leeds circuit altogether, which then comprehended Sheffield and York also, extending into Derbyshire on the south, to Hull on the east, and on north as far as Newton, under Roseberry-topping."

Nothing of particular interest can be ascertained to have transpired till 1755, when Mr. Wesley visited the neighbourhood. He preached at Todmorden, "where (he says) the people stood row above row, on the side of the mountains, and they were rough enough to outward appearance, but their hearts were as melted wax." From Todmorden he proceeded to Heptonstall the same day "at three o'clock I preached on the brow of a mountain, the rain began as soon as I began to speak. I prayed that if God saw best it might be stayed, till I had delivered his word. It was so, and then began again." He next "preached at Ewood, at seven o'clock in the morning, and again at four o'clock in the afternoon, I began in a meadow near the house; the wind was so high I could hardly speak, but the winds too are in God's hands, and in a few minutes that inconvenience ceased." Thus was this holy man owned of God in an apparent and astonishing manner: at Heptonstall the rains of heaven abated while he delivered his message, and at Ewood the winds were hushed into silence while he preached the whole counsel of God. In his route to the conference he preached at Birstal and Bradford, but no mention is made in his journal of Halifax.

The locality of Ewood will I presume, be well known by the reader; at the time of Mr. Wesley's visit it appears to have been in the possession of the Rev. Mr. Grimshaw's son. The adjacent mansion house, Ewood-hall, was subsequently for many years occupied as a seminary by the Rev. John Fawcett, D. D., a man of sterling piety, of high character, a noted author, and concerning whose candour and charitableness too much cannot be said.

I cannot content myself with a passing notice of this revered and excellent character. He was born near Bradford, where he derived considerable benefit from the occasional visits of Mr. Whitfield and Mr. Wesley. In the year 1764 he became pastor of the church previously alluded to, as established at Wainsgate. The church rapidly increased and it was found advisable to erect a new meeting house; a plot of ground was purchased in a central part of Hebden-Bridge, whereon a plain substantial building was erected in 1777. Here Dr. Fawcett spent his days in preaching the "riches in Christ Jesus," till 1817, the year of his death. The year following a Life of the Dr. was published, written by his son; from which it appears that in the month of Sept. 1755, during a visit of Mr. Whitfield into the North of England, Mr. Fawcett was awakened to a state of his danger, and from that time he began to make a more public profession of religion, connecting himself with the Methodists in Bradford, with whom he remained in union for three years. He had however always maintained a firm and decided attachment to

Mr. Whitfield, and so long as that distinguished character and Mr. Wesley acted in concert, their respective followers, who were united in society together, considered themselves still as members of the church of England. But Mr. Whitfield, upon some discussions relative to the calvinistic and arminian faith, embracing the former creed, his followers discontinued their connection with Mr. Wesley's societies.

It is a general subject of remark by several authors—"that many of those who had been particularly attached to Mr. Whitfield, afterwards joined the Independents." This was the case with Dr. Fawcett, though subsequently he united himself to the Baptist Church, It is foreign to my purpose to trace his steps after seceding from the Wesleyan body, but in justice to his character I feel bound to give place to at least a single extract from his Life.

"As a minister of the gospel, notwithstanding his eminent talents, he was singularly modest; always speaking of himself with self-abasement. His mind on all occasions, and through all the changing scenes of life, appeared to be deeply impressed under a sense of the importance and responsibility of the ministerial office. In treating doctrinal subjects he was careful to avoid those rash expressions, which however pleasing to some, are dangerous to the licentious and the unwary. It was not his practice to dwell on subtle speculations and perverse disputations, which engender envy and strife, much less did he introduce trifling subjects which are at best calculated only to please the

fancy; those who heard him statedly must have seen that his aim was to reach the heart, to touch the consciences of sinners, to bring them to Christ and to edify the church. According to the poet's description, he was

Simple, grave, sincere, in doctrine uncorrupt,
In language plain, and plain in manner;
Decent, solemn, chaste, and natural in gesture,
Much impressed himself, as conscious
Of his awful charge,
And anxious mainly that the charge he fed
Might feel it too."

During the year 1756, the neighbourhood of Halifax was favored with a visit of Mr. Whitfield; in one of his letters dated August 24th, 1756, he says—"It is now a fortnight since I came to Leeds, in and about which I preached eight days, thrice almost every day to thronged and affected auditories. On Sunday last at Bradford, in the morning, the audience consisted of about ten thousand; at noon and in the evening, at Birstal, to near double the number. Though hoarse I was helped to speak so that all heard." When Mr. Whitfield arrived at Birstal, a platform was erected at the foot of a hill adjoining the town, whence he addressed the immense concourse of twenty thousand people, on the declivity of the hill. Much as he was in the habit of public speaking and preaching to large and promiscuous multitudes, when he cast his eyes on the vast assemblage around him, and was about to mount the temporary stage, he expressed to his surrounding friends a considerable degree of timidity; but when he began to speak, an unusual solemnity pervaded the vast

assembly. Thousands during the sermon, as was often the case, vented their emotions in tears and groans, and

“Fools, who came to mock, remained to pray.”

Returning to Methodism in Halifax, it is not until the year 1757 that we have certain grounds for conjecture, that the established society in Halifax had Mr. Wesley among them. In that year he was at Birstal on May 15th, and on the Wednesday following he visited Halifax, whence he rode to Heptonstall. Here a large congregation was awaiting him, and to such an extent had his fame spread since his last visit, that the people placed themselves on the tops of the houses, being otherwise unable to gain a sight of Mr. Wesley.

In Mr. Wesley's journal a circumstance is recorded, which may not be considered irrelevant to the subject in hand. “Here (Heptonstall) I was informed of the earthquake the day before. On Tuesday, May 17th, many persons in several parts within five or six miles, heard a strange noise under the ground, which some compared to thunder, others to the rumbling of carts; quickly after they felt the earth rock under them, and wave to and fro. Many who were within doors, heard their pewter and glass clatter, many in the fields felt the ground shake under their feet; and all agreed as to time, though they knew nothing of each other's account.” He found that this earthquake “had been sensibly felt by very many persons from Bingley, three miles eastward of Keighley, to the neighbourhood of Preston. It was every where preceded by a hoarse

rumbling, about three o'clock ; so that in a few minutes it had run from east to west between fifty and sixty miles." Concerning this singular circumstance, I am not aware that any author, save Mr. W. mentions it.*

Among those who were contemporaneous with the early Methodists is James Parker. His conversion took place at the Parish Church, where he obtained a clear knowledge of the forgiving mercy of God, at the sacramental table. Being led to attend the ministry of the

* Though this country has, by a merciful Providence, been preserved from those disasters, caused by earthquakes, which are to be considered the most tremendous that can afflict and terrify the globe, yet the case recorded by Mr. Wesley is, by no means, an insulated one. We have the record of a similar visitation in 1755. From Thursday, March 25th to the following Sunday, the mountain ridge in the North Riding of Yorkshire, known by the name of Black Hambleton, was subject to fearful vibrations accompanied with the rolling of subterranean thunder. At Whiston cliffs, near Sutton, and near Osmotherly, large masses of the hills were detached from their stations, and thrown down into the valley ; thirty or forty acres of ground near the last-named village, presented most remarkable appearances ; the ground was cleft asunder in a thousand places, in some instances the green turf was pared off two or three inches thick, and wrapped up like sheets of lead ; while in other places it was not cleft or broken at all, but was raised in ridges five or six feet long, exactly like the graves in a church-yard.

On Thursday, Aug. 20th, 1835, early in the morning nearly the whole of Lancashire, and the West-Riding of Yorkshire, was visited by a severe shock of an earthquake. At Preston and the neighbourhood, particularly northward, the inhabitants were frightfully alarmed at the awful circumstance. A gentleman who had witnessed several earthquakes—one of them deplorably fatal—during a residence in a northern province of South America, happened not to be asleep, and immediately recognized the peculiar noise, or internal thunder, that generally precedes and accompanies these fearful throes of the earth, and in an instant most sensibly felt the house tremble in a manner resembling the vibration caused by the passing of several heavily laden waggons on the rough pavement of the street, but with this important difference, that the vibration, though short, was much stronger, and, as he supposed, more of a lateral than a perpendicular mo-

Methodist preachers, he eventually became a member of their society, without however dissolving his deep-rooted attachment to the establishment. In fact it might be said of all the members of society in Halifax, that they were members of the establishment, it being their custom, during Mr. Wesley's life-time and up to the year 1793, statedly to attend the services of the

tion. The window, which was partly thrown up for the admission of air, was shaken to and fro several times, and the bedstead creaked, though no one on it moved. One of the family, also awake, was perfectly sensible of the shock, which lasted, including the noise, as nearly as could be conjectured, about thirty seconds. It was early dawn of day; the new moon had risen 30 to 35 degrees; the sky was cloudless, with the exception of a streak of clouds over the N. E. horizon, and the air was calm and serene, but sultry. The weather, during the week, had been remarkably hot, the thermometer, in the shade, standing as high as 74 degrees. Lightning, too, had been peculiarly vivid in the evenings, but rarely accompanied by thunder. The shock appeared to come from the north-west quarter, and to pass to the south-east; but of this there can be little certainty. Hundreds of persons in the town and neighbourhood experienced the shock, and many parties rose from their beds in the greatest possible alarm. It was felt distinctly at Blackburn, and even at more distant towns. At Garstang, Ulverston, Kendal, Settle, Poulton, Southport, &c. and along the coast, the shocks were severe; and from the accounts of most of the towns in the northern parts of Lancashire, the shock is described as being violent, shaking the very ground and the buildings on it. Some of the persons who felt the shock compared it to the motion of a ship in a storm; and a traveller who was crossing Lancaster sands at the moment, states that he expected to see the sands open under the horse's feet. At one place, beyond Lancaster, some broken glass was shaken out of the window by the concussion, while in the city a chimney was knocked down in Bridge Street, and a wall, which had been in an insecure state, thrown down. So violent was the vibration that, in several parts of the country, people jumped out of bed, and examined their houses, imagining, from the creaking of doors and the trembling of windows, that robbers had entered in their dwellings. A Preston paper stated that so violent was the shock at the residence of the Rev. Mr. Clay, at the Cliff, as to cause the bells in the house to ring. At Clitheroe, the shock was equally violent. In some houses the doors were shaken open; the plaster dropped from the ceiling; flower-pots were

Parish church ; the hours of preaching at the Methodist chapel being accommodated for such a purpose. James Parker was made a leader in the society, which office he sustained with unblemished piety and ardent zeal for the space of forty years. For a considerable time he was the subject of severe persecution, in fact such was the malevolent dispositions of the profane and wicked,

shaken down : and the pots and glasses rattled. A gentleman, in describing the earthquake at this place, remarked "two shocks were distinctly felt, the latter by almost every person in the neighbourhood. Those who heard and felt the first describe it as a slight vibration of their bed-rooms, about twelve o'clock at night ; but so slight that, if nothing else had followed, it would have been forgotten altogether. However, about half-past three, a rumble like distant thunder was heard, which was instantly followed by a violent shaking of the doors, windows, and furniture of all the houses in the district, many people leaped out of their beds, and some rushed into the streets with fear." The gentleman himself was awakened by hearing the doors of a wardrobe in his room shaking as if some one were dancing on the chamber floor. The shock was felt at Downham, Wiswell, Pendleton, Milton, Waddington, and all the surrounding villages. At Liverpool, Manchester, and Rochdale there was a slight sensation ; at Stockport many of the inhabitants of mud-wall cottages were in great fear lest their dwellings should be destroyed.

At Blackpool the shock was singularly severe, a gentleman seen by the writer felt the bed on which he lay distinctly reel to and fro, as also several others who were visiting at that watering place. Some milkcans had been reared at the door of a farm-house in the neighbourhood, but the violent vibration of the earth set them all in motion, to the alarm of the inmates. This earthquake extended, as we have said, through the West-Riding of Yorkshire. At Leeds it was very perceptible. About half-past three o'clock in the morning of the day before-named, an individual was surprised first of all by a noise like the rolling of the wheels of a coach rapidly driven along a paved street at a distance from the dwelling ; immediately succeeded by a most unaccountable and violent shaking of the windows. Another person who was up at the period, stated, that at the same time there was a strange sound so unlike anything ever heard before as to excite immediate attention and alarm ; and that it was connected with a shaking of the house, precisely as though individuals were running hastily across the apartments. The same phenomena were noticed by numerous other

that neither he nor his companions dare proceed twice together the same road to Skircoat Green, to attend the band, or other meetings, or preachings which might be held there. They were assailed with arguments of prevention in the shape of sods of earth and rotten eggs. Jas. Parker became a particular object of their enmity, and after a hard day's work, in order to escape the snares of his persecutors, he would walk two or three miles round the country, that he might find his way unmolested to that hallowed spot where he had been wont to enjoy gracious visitations from on high.

The decease of James Parker took place in 1802, he being eighty years of age, and such was the esteem and respect entertained for his character, that, in addition to other friends, three clergymen attended his funeral.

The pious character just referred to was one of the founders of prayer-meetings in Halifax. In company with Isaac Wade and John Holroyde he had been to Haworth to hear Mr. Grimshaw; on their return to

individuals. At Skipton and all along the valley of the Aire, in the neighbourhoods of Halifax and Huddersfield, and in several other places, the same appalling rumbling and vibrations excited the astonishment of the inhabitants.

The following curious phenomena was noticed on the morning of the earthquake—somewhere about two o'clock a. m. a smack from the Wyre was off Bispham, at the distance of about a mile and a half from the shore, when the master, who was at the helm, perceived within a few yards of the vessel, a large volume of pale fire whirling round with great rapidity over the surface of the sea. (Report says that a slight shock was felt at Kirkham at two o'clock.)

Happy, however, is it for Britain, that notwithstanding these solitary manifestations of His power, to her, nor in the whirlwind, nor in the earthquake, nor in the fire, but “in the still, small voice,” the presence of her God is manifest.

Halifax, they tarried for a while at the house of Isaac Wade, who then resided in Northgate; while conversing upon what they had heard at Haworth, it was suggested that before they parted a hymn should be sung and then one exercise in prayer. This was accordingly done and the singing having attracted the neighbours, some of whom made way into the house; when the three rose from their knees such was the love which had enkindled upon the hearts, that they could not separate till another hymn had been sung and another prayer offered up. At the close of this first prayer-meeting it was determined to hold another such meeting the Sabbath evening following. The circumstance was soon noised abroad, and many were the taunts and sneers the pious trio endured; the Sunday came, the prayer-meeting was held, and the house filled with people; Sunday after Sunday they thus met and prayed, their numbers continually increasing: a pious woman from another part of the town besought them to come to her house and hold similar meetings; to this they at first objected, but upon entreaty promised to divide their force and hold a meeting at her house. This being done, other calls were made; and in this manner, and about this time, did the system of holding prayer-meetings in different parts of the town, at the same hour, first originate. From this small beginning, we are now presented with an organised body of prayer-leaders and conductors, amounting to 68 persons, having treasurers and secretaries, and holding 22 prayer meetings in different parts of the town, at the conclusion of the

evening service at the chapels ; the total number of places where prayer meetings are held being 52.

In continuation of our history, there is little material for remark, save that Mr. Wesley visited the neighbourhood in 1759, and preached at Stainland Chapel, near Elland. Respecting Mr. W.'s visit to Stainland, the extract from his Journal of that circumstance will be found of interest. "Saturday, April 21st, at half an hour past ten, we reached Stainland Chapel, near Elland. It is a handsome building, near the top of a mountain, and surrounded with mountains on all sides ; it was filled from end to end. Mr. Grimshaw read prayers and I preached on part of the second lesson. In the room where I dressed myself were a young man and his sister, both ill of a fever. I know not that ever they heard the preaching : however I desired that we might go to prayers. They presently melted into tears. Oh may God preach his gospel to their hearts !"

The chapel in which Mr. Wesley preached on this occasion is now commonly designated the "old chapel"* and being in a great measure identified with the progress of Methodism in Stainland, as well as having some peculiarities, the writer must necessarily enter into detail. The want of a suitable place of worship having long been experienced in the vicinage now concerned in our enquiries, a general subscription was entered into, and in the year 1755 the chapel we have just noticed was erected, with the probable intention of being a chapel of

* This designation has arisen from the subsequent erection of an Independent Chapel near Stainland.

ease under the establishment. It is vested in trustees, and the deeds require the performance of the church of England service. A dispute, however, arose among the trustees soon after its erection, when those who strenuously opposed its becoming a chapel of ease gained the ascendancy. Since that time it has been occupied, according to the temporary pre-eminence of each party, both by the ministers of the Wesleyan Methodist body, and by those of the Independent persuasion. I am unable to give the name of the first minister, but (as will be seen in a future part of the work) Mr. Floyde, a Methodist preacher, was for some time the stated pastor; his successor was Mr. Lowel, afterwards a dissenting minister, who died some years ago at Bristol. The pulpit was next occupied for seven years by Mr. J. Bates, whose opinions, at that time, were tinged with the sentiments of Baxter, though in a subsequent part of his life he joined the Methodists, preached in their chapels, and became a trustee. Mr. Samuel Barraclough, a local preacher in the Wesleyan connexion, next became the stated minister, and retained the office for eleven years, when he became an itinerant preacher in the Methodist New Connexion. The chapel now fell into the hands of the Dissenters, and was occupied by them for eight years. When the next vacancy occurred, for some time the pulpit was occupied by the Wesleyans and Independents alternately; until an attempt was made by the latter body to appropriate the chapel to themselves exclusively, when a contest ensued, which truth compels me to state, was characterized by feelings

and tempers, unknown and averse to christianity: the event, however, ended in a few families attached to the church of England uniting their votes with those of the Wesleyans, for the service to be conducted according to the deeds of the chapel. Happily the feelings engendered by the controversy just alluded to, have subsided, and I believe both parties now review the contest with regret and sorrow.

On the withdrawal of the Independents, the Rev. David Barraclough was unanimously elected minister in the year 1813. Having this opportunity, it would ill become the writer to pass by unnoticed a minister of God, venerable in years and in labours more abundant, whose faithful ministry, for a period now of nearly twenty-three years, has proved an inestimable benefit to his own congregation, and to the surrounding neighbourhood, were it not that

Modest merit deprecates the praise its worth demands.

It may be necessary to add, that service is performed in the chapel twice every Sabbath day, the congregation being composed chiefly of Methodists, who appear, from their deep respect for the sublime liturgy of the establishment, to appreciate and enjoy as a privilege the stated and regular use of it which the chapel deeds demand. Mr. Barraclough frequently exchanges pulpits with the Methodist Preachers in the Sowerby-bridge circuit, and they occasionally hold their Sabbath-evening service, at Stainland, in his chapel.

In the month of July, 1759, Mr. Wesley preached at Halifax to a crowded congregation, in the chapel

and no wonder that he writes "the preaching house was like an oven," when we remember its extreme smallness and the extent of the congregation. According to his custom he preached at five the following morning.

From the perusal of several foregoing passages the supposition might arise, that the regular society and congregation must have been extensive;—far otherwise. The Methodists as yet had progressed but slowly, and except upon Mr. Wesley's visits, (when hundreds and in many instances thousands flocked to his ministry,) the regular congregation was thin and meagre.

This part of the neighbourhood was again visited by Mr. Wesley in 1761. We find him at Haworth where such a vast multitude had assembled from the surrounding neighbourhood that the church would scarce contain a tithe of the people. Mr. Grimshaw had a plan which he invariably adopted on such occasions; he caused a scaffold to be fixed on the outside of one of the church windows, through which Mr. Wesley went after reading prayers: at some extraordinary times the church was entirely filled with communicants.

The small society at Heptonstall, appears to have been shaken and materially injured, on account of two of the leaders there having imbibed heterodox opinions. No sooner, however did Mr. Wesley visit the society than peace was restored, the two disturbers were led to see their error, and harmony and prosperity followed.

Of the society at Halifax Mr. Wesley also writes—"New opinions had done harm here, but at this time all was quiet." This state of things was not of long

duration, and it becomes my painful duty to present the reader with a posture of affairs by no means pleasing or enlivening.

We have already stated that the society in the town was very diminutive, it appears in 1762 to have consisted of but 31 members, the principal person among them being the talented and influential Titus Knight. His name stood at the head of the trustees for the preaching-house, he was in fact already a star of rising magnitude, and when he left the connexion, and embraced the calvinistic belief, he drew many of the congregation, and the half of the society after him. It was a sorrowful time when the remnant met the preacher who next officiated at the preaching house in Church lane ; at the close of his discourse he requested the members who were still attached to Methodism, to remain a little while longer ; after the congregation had departed, the reduced society of *sixteen* members came into the singers' pew—the preacher (Mr. Wm. Thompson) descended from the pulpit, and they sung, and prayed, and wept. Some of them were of opinion they had better give up all, but the preacher exhorted them to cling to one another, and through God's help they followed his advice, and so weathered the separation. It was some relief to the threatening darkness which almost overwhelmed the little band, that their prayers were answered in the return of several who had left the fold. Of Mr. Knight's subsequent history, a sketch has already been rendered, but this additional remark is requisite—though honest and straight-forward in the

search and exposition of truth, his spirit was not narrowed by bigotry—he remained on the most friendly terms with those from whom he had conscientiously seceded, and ever exhibited towards them benevolent and kindly feelings.

There is another eminent character who, upon introduction to the reader, will again shew the connexion of Methodism with the founders of other churches. To the *Life of John Fawcett, D. D.*, a work previously alluded to, I am indebted for the following interesting narration. “Among the number of those who came forward at this time, 1764, and were for many years great blessings to this neighbourhood, the Rev. James Crossley is deserving of particular notice. He was born in the year 1731, at Lower Saltonstall, a small hamlet in Warley near Halifax. His parents were industrious members of society; but having a large family were not able to give him a liberal education. His disposition from his earliest years was cheerful and engaging. Whilst young, he had many alarms of conscience, which were much increased by his attendance upon the ministry of the Rev. Mr. Grimshaw, and among the Methodists who had sometimes preaching at Luddenden. It is not known what was the precise time, or what were the particular means, of his conversion to God; but he became a zealous professor among the Methodists, and used all his influence to induce his former companions in sin to follow him in the ways and service of God. He was a leader at one of the prayer meetings, and having frequently dropped a few words by way of ex-

hortation, he at length ventured to make a few remarks from a portion of scripture. He was led to devote his attention to the study of God's most holy word, with a view to the ministry, and some change having taken place in his religious sentiments respecting the doctrines of the Gospel, a separation from his former religious connexions ensued, and a large room was hired at Upper Saltonstall, where he preached regularly every Lord's day." Being ordained the day subsequent to Titus Knight's ordination in 1763, he officiated at Booth chapel for the space of twenty years, which he at last resigned, having received a call from Bradford; but shortly after he died, it is generally supposed of a broken heart.

The death of Mr. Grimshaw, in 1763, has already been alluded to; his successor as superintendant of the Haworth circuit was Mr. John Pawson; Mr. William Fugill, Mr. Paul Greenwood, and Mr. Daniel Bumstead being his colleagues. In the neighbourhood of Keighley there was a glorious revival, and which continued for some time. The stability of the circuit was shaken, however, by the conduct of Mr. Fugill, who, though endued with considerable ministerial abilities, and for many years greatly esteemed by the people, eventually became an apostate, and was expelled the connexion in 1768. The steward of the circuit at this time, appears to have been James Greenwood.

CHAPTER VI.

New Chapel at Heptonstall. Messrs. Murlin, Pawson. and Greewood. 1766, Mr. Wesley in Halifax. Blakey Spencer—cruel treatment by a mob—retributive Justice. Messrs. Hopper, Lee, and Bumstead. Halifax is taken from the Birstal circuit. Singular account of a young woman. Allusion to Elizabeth Spencer. New Chapel at Bradshaw. Methodism at Jagger Green—Joseph and Richard Walker. 1774, Mr. Wesley preaches in the Parish Church, Halifax. Account of the Rev. Mr. Venn.

HEPTONSTALL has frequently been noticed in connexion with this history, and it may be proper to observe, that about 1764 a chapel was built there, under the direction of Mr. Wesley, and erected, of course, in the octagon form, of which he was peculiarly fond. During the year just mentioned Mr. Wesley preached in the shell of the new house; he then proceeded to Halifax and preached to the society in the evening. The Rev. Mr. Venn, vicar of Huddersfield, being then on a visit to certain of his friends here, returned with Mr. Wesley to Huddersfield, where he preached the following morning. The subsequent year Mr. Wesley was again in the neighbourhood.

The names and stations of the preachers were for the first time published in the minutes of conference in 1765. Birstal was the circuit to which Halifax was attached,

and the preachers who were stationed there, Mr. John Murlin, Mr. John Pawson, and Mr. Parson Greenwood.

In 1766, Mr. Wesley, while visiting the northern counties, embraced Halifax in his route. "Thursday, July 31st, I preached at Bacup, and then rode on to Heptonstall. The tall mountain on which it stands is quite steep and abrupt only where the roads are made; and the deep valleys that surround it, as well as the sides of the mountains beyond, are well clothed with grass, corn, and trees. I preached with great enlargement of heart, on *Now is the day of salvation*. The renegade methodists, first turning calvinists, then anabaptists, made much confusion here for a season. But as they have now taken themselves away, the poor people are in peace again. Friday, August 1st, I rode to Ewood. The last time I was here, young Mr. Grimshaw received us in the same hearty manner as his father used to do. But he too is now gone into eternity! So in a few years the family is extinct! I preached at one in a meadow near the house, to a numerous congregation; and we sang with one heart,

Let sickness blast, and death devour,
If heaven will recompense our pains:
Perish the grass, and fade the flower,
Since firm the word of God remains.

In the evening I preached at Halifax. When I began the sun was intensely hot; but quickly the clouds covered it." Mr. Wesley remained in Halifax during the Saturday, to the joy and comfort of the society. On

the Sunday he preached at Haworth, the people followed him, and there ensued another of those blessed scenes of which we have previously spoken. There is the following allusion to it in Mr. Wesley's Journal:—"when the prayers at Haworth were ended, I preached from a little scaffold on the south side of the church, on those words in the gospel, *O that thou hadst known the things that belong unto thy peace!* The communicants alone (a sight which has not been seen since Mr. Grimshaw's death) filled the church. In the afternoon the congregation was supposed to be the largest which had ever been there: but strength was given me in proportion, so that I believe all could hear." The circumstances of the society at Halifax appear to have been indifferent, there being mention, in the minutes of conference for 1766, of a grant of £10 from the yearly subscription.

The preachers who had this year been stationed in the Birstal circuit, were four—Messrs. James Oddie, Thomas Hanby, Danl. Bumstead, and Mosley Cheek. It is a singular fact, and merits a passing notice, that three of these preachers withdrew from the ministry, whether from the lack of zeal or health cannot now be ascertained. James Oddie began his career as a Methodist preacher in 1746, and withdrew or ceased to travel in 1771. Thomas Hanby commenced in 1754, and died in the work in 1797, and whose death, it must be recorded, was a grievous affliction to the people, "his praise was in all the churches." Daniel Bumstead, it would seem, entered upon the work in 1759, and Mosley Cheek, in 1764; the former departed from it in

1775, and the latter, who had been ordained as a clergyman, in 1769. The early circuits extending over a large space of ground, the preachers were almost constantly travelling, living the while in the friends' houses, and it may have been in consequence of their being so often absent from their families, together with their incessant labors, that many of those who constituted the first race of Methodist preachers were induced to desist from travelling. It would be well, did those whose everlasting croakings about "bringing Methodism back to early times" disturb the peace and annoy the feelings of the well-disposed, eschew this truth—such was the harassing and excessive fatigue imposed upon the early preachers, that comparatively few could bear up under the load, and those who did survive the first hardships were men of iron constitutions. Out of two hundred and eighteen preachers, which Mr. Myles in his chronological list terms the first race of Methodist preachers, no less a number than *one hundred and thirteen* desisted from travelling, and a majority of the rest fell prematurely in the work—human nature being overwhelmed by the toil.

In pushing forward the ark of the covenant, and publishing His gospel to whom "every knee shall bow," many and malignant were the enemies with whom the little but zealous society had to combat; some of these we have already noticed, and it is now our duty to record another instance of the intolerance of the ungodly, and their determined opposition to the word of truth—an instance, it may be remarked, wherein is displayed

the flagrant wickedness of an enraged and impious populace, followed by the retributive justice of a Divine Being, without whose cognizance, not even a sparrow falls to the ground. Allusion was made in a former part of our history to Blakey Spencer, and in recurring to this zealous and pious individual, it must be mentioned that having commenced the career of a local preacher, he not only employed his talents to the edification of those in his immediate neighbourhood, but, impelled by his love for souls, pushed forth his exertions into different parts of the district with which we are concerned—into nooks and corners, where lived a race of beings uncultivated as the soil they trod, and rugged as the mountain fastnesses they inhabited. Careless of his welfare, this zealous champion reared the standard of the cross, and preached the name of Jesus, with undaunted fortitude, and even amid hot persecution, with unabated zeal. In the neighbourhood of Ripponden and Stirk bridge, Blakey Spencer had more than once been mobbed and pelted with stones. About the period of which we are now writing, he had been preaching near the latter place, when the people shewed, by their hostile movements, a determination to execute a threat they had before uttered. He endeavoured to evade their grasp, and succeeded for a while in out-stripping his pursuers, but his strength failing him, they pounced like vultures on their prey: rough treatment ensued, and it will give a glimpse of the depravity and semi-barbarism of the neighbourhood, when it is stated that this mob was composed alike of women as men;—not

content with the base and cruel treatment of which he was the subject, he was thrown upon the ground and dragged to the edge of the rivulet, a short space above Sowerby-bridge. The stream being at that time much swollen, the waters dashed along their channel with hoarse and lofty murmurs, and just opposite the spot where the mob had dragged their victim, was one of those eddies which are caused by a sand-hole in the bed of the stream; the rushing and whirling of the waters creamed the surface with foam, and pointing to this whirlpool, a *woman*, who lived hard by and who had shewn herself more vociferous than the rest, shouted with maddening fury "in with him! drown him, drown him!" The mob would have seized poor Spencer, to put in force this hellish mandate; but such had already been their brutal usage, that he lay senseless on the ground; they saw his state, and left him for dead, and the woman's thirst for his blood remained unsated. The poor sufferer lay for a considerable time insensible, but recovering, with great difficulty and enduring intense pain, crawled home. The sequel must be told.

Within a few days after this occurrence, the woman previously noticed was standing on the edge of the rivulet, where she had come to wash her mop. Holding it by the extremity of the handle, she was cleansing it in the eddy, when by the force of the stream it was sucked in, the woman herself was drawn after,—for a few moments she was whirled in the pool, and when taken out of the waters her spirit had fled to appear before that God who has declared "he will avenge the

blood of his servants, and will render vengeance to his adversaries."

In 1767, Mr. Bumstead became the first preacher, Messrs. John Nelson, Thomas Briscoe, and Thomas Westall being appointed to labor with him in the circuit. Methodism progressed considerably during this and the following year: the work was deepened in the hearts of the people; at Skircoat Green, in particular, an unusual solemnity was attendant upon the ministry of the word. James Parker used to record a particular service he attended at that place, when during one of Nelson's sermons, the people labored visibly under the manifested power. Mrs. Wood, (a daughter of James Parker) also remembers hearing him at Matthew Moorhouse's, Elland, where a similar influence prevailed. It must have been a source of high gratification to the society, in the appointment of Nelson to mature that good work—to water that good seed he had sown.

A change took place in 1768 in the appointment of preachers; those stationed to labor in the circuit were Messrs C. Hopper, T. Lee, D. Bumstead, and P. Greenwood. This was the third year of Mr. Bumstead's appointment. With respect to Mr. Hopper's appointment to Birstal, he says, "in the beginning of Sept. 1768, I left Newcastle-upon-Tyne, and set out with my wife for Birstal, in Yorkshire. The Lord brought us to our journey's end in peace. We met with a hearty welcome. Our friends rejoiced with us, and we praised God together."

In 1769 Halifax was taken from the Birstal circuit,

and joined to Bradford, (that town becoming the head of a circuit at this time) Mr. John Oliver and Mr. Lee being the stationed preachers. There appears to have been a deficiency in the receipts of the society this year the conference minutes having the record of Halifax receiving the sum of £6 1s. 5d.

Mr. Wesley preached during the course of the year on Birstal hill, but not till 1770 do we find him in Halifax. On Thursday, June 28th, he preached at the residence of the late Mr. Sutcliffe, at Hoo-hole, near Mytholmroyde Bridge, where a neat and commodious chapel is now erected. On Wednesday, July 4th, Mr. W. visited the society at Halifax, and in his Journal there is record of a remarkable case which fell under his notice. The reader must keep in mind, while perusing the singular circumstance, that Mr. Wesley from various causes, (some of which it must be conceded; afforded something more than an airy foundation,) not merely was a believer in supernatural appearances, but his mind might also be tintured with a belief in witchcraft. The following relation is in his own words.

“Here I had an opportunity of enquiring thoroughly into a very extraordinary case. On Jany. 26th, 1760, a young woman of two and twenty, felt in the evening an uncommon coldness in her feet. Presently after, she was seized with convulsions. The disorder from that time attended her, more or less, every day, in spite of all the medicines which were administered by the most skilful physicians. One of her fits began a little before we went in. At first she fell back in the chair seem-

ingly senseless, and wrought (like one strangled,) in her breast and throat. In two or three minutes she sprung up, turned round many times, then dropped down, and began beating her head against the stone floor. Quickly she started up, leaped right upwards many times, then ran to and fro with a hundred odd gesticulations. She beat herself on the head, tore her hair, and attempted to run into the fire. Being put into a chair, she spoke a good deal, but not articulately. She was convulsed again from head to foot ; and afterwards said wildly, 'Where am I? Who are these? I want my father? I will go to my father?' In about an hour she came to her senses.

"I should have imagined, the physicians would have supposed all this to be counterfeit. But it seems one and all thought that could not be ; as she could have no motive to feign, since she gained nothing thereby, living upon the fruit of her own and her father's labour. And many of the circumstances could not be accounted for upon that supposition. Such were her tears, her foaming at the mouth, her tearing her hair, striking herself, and beating her head against the stones ; her strong convulsions ; and what none can well conceive unless they saw it, the change of her countenance, which was horrid and dreadful, yea diabolical, as long as the fits were upon her, but was remarkably pretty and agreeable, as soon as she came to herself.

"When old Dr. Alexander was asked what her disorder was ; he answered, 'It is what formerly they would have called being bewitched.' And why should

they not call it so now? Because the infidels have hooted witchcraft out of the world : and the complaisant christians, in large numbers, have joined with them in the cry. I do not so much wonder at this; that many of these should herein talk like infidels. But I have sometimes been inclined to wonder, at the pert, saucy, indecent manner, wherein some of those trample upon men far wiser than themselves : at their speaking so dogmatically against what not only the whole world, heathen and christian, believed in all ages past, but thousands, learned as well as unlearned, firmly believe at this day. I instance in Dr. Smollett and Mr. Guthrie whose manner of speaking concerning witchcraft, must be extremely offensive to every sensible man, who cannot give up his Bible.”*

Nothing of particular interest remains to be recorded relative to the society during this year ; rest, peace and quietness pervaded their numbers, and the financial

* Nor should I have been induced to make this extract from Mr. Wesley's journal had not the circumstance therein noted caused considerable agitation at the time. The young woman in question was the daughter of one Zechariah Simpson, her name was Sally, and the family resided in the fold or yard adjoining the Ring of Bells public-house. The following particulars, which the writer had from an authentic source, may not only serve to throw a stronger light upon the strange circumstance, which appears to have excited Mr. Wesley's feelings in no small degree ; but also give a sufficient reason *why* such a record should have been made in his Journal.

On the evening of the day previously mentioned, while the family of the Simpson's were at tea, there came to the door a deformed old woman, wrapped in a tattered cloak, having a basket slung on her arm, in which were displayed the usual trinkery of a common pedlar. Having a small bundle of leather to dispose of, she repeatedly offered it to old Simpson being wishful to sell it at any price. He declined, however, purchasing ; and at last absolutely refused. The old woman became morose, and flew into a passion : Mrs. Simpson interfered, and bade her begone, on which

affairs seem to have been in a tolerable condition. The preachers were the much-beloved and highly-esteemed Christopher Hopper and George Wadsworth; the latter of whom commenced the work in 1770, was visited with a stroke of palsy in 1795, and died in 1797.

The head of the circuit was in receipt this year of £50. 6s. 8d. from the conference, and what is singular its name generally appears attached to similar sums and under similar circumstances. No blame however can be attached to Halifax, that society always standing in honorable ranks, and generally having the satis-

she left the house, muttering menaces against Sally, who was seated by the fire. After the departure of the old woman, Sally, who up to that period had been hearty and well, immediately became a subject of these fits, and had always resting upon her *a dread of ever again seeing the old pedlar*; so strong was this fear that she seldom dare venture from home, and in the evening never. Medical skill, of even first-rate eminence, proved of no avail; the fits, in spite of every effort, continued, and the dreadful manner in which she was agitated, as described by Mr. Wesley, was beheld by others. One of the writer's friends who has frequently seen her in these fits, says that the most strange feature in her gesticulations was, the resting solely on one heel for the space of two or three minutes, all the while whirling her body round with an amazing velocity, without even touching the floor with the other foot. Death at last put an end to her sufferings, for while in one of her fits she expired; her body was kept considerably beyond the usual time, but the corpse never went cold, and in that state it was consigned to the grave.

It may however be objected by some, that the sequence of this visitation to the menaces of the pedlar, does not *prove* their connexion as of cause with effect. Nor indeed does the dread evinced by the unhappy female lest she should again see the old crone, establish the belief which was general at the time of Mr. Wesley's visit to Halifax, that she was under the influence of witchcraft. The writer offers no opinion, the mere facts only are given, and at any rate, upon their consideration, none can accuse Mr. Wesley, (who had been requested to pry into the circumstance by Dr. Jackson, an eminent physician then practising at Halifax) of vulgar credulity in this matter.

faction of being unencumbered with debt.

The year 1771 saw no material alteration in the general aspect of the society. Mr. T. Hanson and Mr. J. Atley were the appointed preachers.

In 1772 the societies in this neighbourhood were again refreshed with Mr. Wesley's visit among them. "Saturday, July 4, I rode (says he) to the Ewood, to S. Lockwood's, formerly the wife of young Mr. Grimshaw; afterward married to Mr. Lockwood, and now again a young widow. Her sister was with her, the relict of Mr. Sutcliffe, whose case was very uncommon. He had for some time used the cold bath, for a nervous disorder, and was advised to try the warm. Immediately he was seized with racking pains all over, and in two hours expired.

"At one I preached at Heptonstall to some thousands of people, who stood just before the preaching house on a lovely green, which rises slope above slope like artificial terraces. Hence we climbed up and down wonderful mountains to Keighley, where many from various parts were waiting for us. Sunday 5, not half the congregation at Haworth could get into the church in the morning, nor a third part in the afternoon: so I stood on a kind of pulpit, near the side of the church. Such a congregation was never seen there before; and I believe all heard distinctly.

"Monday 6, at noon I preached to a large congregation at Bingley, and at Bradford in the evening. From this comfortable place, on Wednesday 8, I went to Halifax. My old friend, Titus Knight, offered me

the use of his new meeting house, larger than Dr. Taylor's at Norwich, full as superb, (so he terms it in his poem,) and finished with the utmost elegance. But I judged more people would attend in the open air, so I preached in the Cow market to a great multitude; our house was well filled at five in the morning. At ten I preached in the new house at Thong: at two in the market place at Huddersfield, to full as large a congregation as at Halifax. Such another we had at Dewsbury in the evening, and my strength was as my day."

It seems that Mr. Knight continued upon the most friendly terms not merely with the people but with Mr. Wesley himself. The service which was conducted by him on the Cow Green is remembered by one or two aged individuals to this day. A gracious influence attended the word, and a fresh impulse being given to the society, a revival ensued and persecution revived. A singular scene took place in the public streets while Mr. Wesley, attended by his friends, was either going to or coming from the Cow green; such a bitter spirit of malignity had been engendered in the minds of the commonalty of the town against the Methodists, that on the occasion just adverted to, a man of the name of Bramley, unable longer to subdue his fiendish rage, burst through the crowd and running towards Mr. W. struck him a most violent blow, with the flat of his hand, on the cheek. The holy saint paused, and though tears started into his eyes from the smartness of the blow, remembering the admonition of his master,—
"whosoever shall smite thee on the right cheek, turn

to him the other also,"—he turned to his avenger "the other also." The coward was so struck with the circumstance that he slunk back into the crowd. I have been thus particular in recording the man's name partly on account of another incident,—of which anon.

About this period, 1772, Mrs. Spencer, who has been alluded to in a previous part of our history, united herself to the little band of devoted Methodists. The following statement, recorded by herself, will serve to shew the mind of the public with respect to this people.—She well remembers stealing away from church to hear the then much-talked-of Titus Knight, but dare not reveal the fact to her parents when she got home, they having previously impressed upon her mind, their firm belief that the people who resorted to the conventicle in Church-lane were nothing more nor less than a parcel of idle, disaffected persons, and who assembled there for no good purpose. Such was the impression under which they and others labored, and hence her fear both on this and other occasions to make known in what company she had been. At length however the odium was removed, and Mrs. Spencer continuing to attend upon their ministry in the end became a member of society. She was married to one of Blakey Spencer's sons, and became a conspicuous character in the early history of the cause.

A change took place in the appointment of preachers for the Bradford circuit, Mr. Hanson being succeeded by Mr. J. Morgan, a plain, rough, but useful preacher. The sum of £28. 7s. was paid this year by the confer-

ence to the Halifax society, some extraordinary and unforeseen circumstances rendering such an advance necessary. The probable reason being, to assist in furnishing the rooms adjoining the preaching house, which were this year fitted up for the reception of one of the preachers. Mr. Morgan was the first who resided in Halifax, and the circumstance was attended with happy consequences.

I have a notice of services being carried on by the Methodist preachers at Blackmires, about this time, but from the barren nature of information from that quarter I am unable as yet to give any particulars.

It was during Mr. Atley's stay in the circuit that a chapel was erected at Bradshaw for the benefit of the numerous congregation which now regularly assembled at James Riley's. In the winter of 1772 Mr. Atley being at Bradshaw according to his appointment, there occurred a very deep snow, which detained him at James Riley's for several days and nights. On each of these nights however there regularly came a number of people to hear Mr. Atley preach, surmounting the difficulties presented by an unusual fall of snow, they availed themselves of the uncommon privilege of hearing a sermon for three or four nights successively. At the close of one of these services a few individuals sat for a while in conversation, when Mr. Atley observed, as the people were so very lively and zealous a small chapel might be built with advantage. The suggestion was taken into serious consideration. An individual in the company, (Luke Shaw, a pious, exemplary, and

judicious man) was desired to carry out the idea, and he accordingly devoted his attention to the subject. After due consideration as to the scite of the chapel, a piece of waste ground on Tod-moor-green was fixed upon, supposing the consent of the lord of the manor could be obtained for the same. Mr. Atley waited upon the proper authorities, the application was acceded to, and the erection of the chapel commenced forthwith.

Mr. Atley being succeeded by Mr. Taylor, as will appear by the bye, it was left to the latter to perfect what had been begun by his predecessor. The chapel being finished soon after conference it was opened by Mr. Taylor, who experienced a deep concern for the welfare of that portion of the vineyard of the Lord over which he was called to preside. Owing to the comparative poverty of the society at Bradshaw their chapel was burdened with a considerable debt. Mr. Taylor nevertheless from the concern he felt for the place travelled over the Halifax, Bradford, and neighbouring circuits for subscriptions and soon had the happiness of placing the chapel in comfortable circumstances.

It is deeply to be deplored that this chapel was not settled upon any regular plan; the subject was agitated but unfortunately no deed of settlement was ever made by its original possessors. The circumstance may be noticed, that such was the eagerness of the people to occupy the chapel, that Mr. Taylor preached to them in the roof-less shell of the building.

Jagger Green, a small hamlet distant about a mile from Stainland, was visited about this time, by the

Methodist preachers. Though I have made mention of Mr. Wesley's visit to the latter place, so far as can be ascertained there was regular preaching at Jagger Green prior to Stainland. Mingled with the early fruits of Methodism in this quarter was the conversion of Joseph Walker, and it would seem the neighbourhood had experienced the benefits of the Methodist ministry, for he attended a class meeting held at Bradley Mill. The change effected by divine grace was soon perceived by his wife, and as he was preparing for his meeting one evening, she said to him with deep earnestness, "Joseph, thou shalt not go to heaven alone, for I will go with thee." With equal primitive simplicity and affection he familiarly replied, "come thy way," and from that day they travelled hand in hand, walking like Zacharias and Elizabeth "in all the commandments of the Lord blameless."

About the same period, Richard Walker, of Forrest, near Stainland, the brother of the individual whom we have just mentioned, was brought to the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus, and also D. Bintcliffe and others, for it appears the preachers now regularly visited Stainland, Crool, near Outlane, and several adjacent places. Much opposition and determined persecution attended the commencement of Methodism at the former place, and the few who dared to follow the Lord Jesus Christ, proved the truth of his own words, that "the world would hate them because they were not of the world." On one occasion a sermon was intended to be delivered in what is called Dobroyd Fold,

when an opulent gentleman (!) in the neighbourhood hearing of the circumstance sent a pack of hounds, to "throw off" in Stainland, purposing by this expedient to put a stop to the preaching. But in this however he was frustrated; when the hounds had arrived near the village, a hare accidentally started up, and led them away, in full cry, in an opposite direction; till coming to Bower's Mill, the hare leaped into the dam, and was seen no more.

Immediately upon the conversion of Joseph Walker he opened his house at Jagger Green, and afterwards at Stainland, for the reception of the preachers, and with true Shunamite benevolence shewed them the rites of hospitality. The malevolence of his wicked neighbours was soon excited: "the Methodist preachers will eat him up" was their cry. This was told among other persons to the superintendent of the circuit, who enquired of his friend whether "he could really afford to receive and entertain them, as he and his colleagues like the Apostle of the Gentiles did not wish to be a burden to the people." Mr. W. who it would seem had just entered into trade, cheerfully replied—"I will try a year at any rate." In about a year's time Mr. Taylor introduced the subject again; "praise the Lord, said Mr. Walker. I am a hundred pounds better than I was last year at this time," and from that period to the present he and his descendants have always kindly and cheerfully entertained the Wesleyan Ministers. And there is one, yet on this side Jordan, a "mother in Israel," whose acts of public and private benevolence,

in addition to christian hospitality, have long gone up for a memorial before God : lest however her generous mind should be offended, I will only add—"her witness is in heaven, and her record is on high."

Of the two brothers previously mentioned, never were brothers more fervently and sincerely attached to each other through life. A spirit like that of David and Jonathan actuated each bosom, but especially subsequent to their conversion : of them may it truly be said "they were lovely and pleasant in their lives, and in their death they were not *long* divided." Richard was called to his reward, June 9th, 1807, in the 63rd year of his age. When visited by his brother, and questioned as to his prospect while traversing the dark valley of the shadow of death, he replied—"Joseph, God never left me in six troubles, and dost thou think he will leave me in the seventh? No, glory be to his name, I feel he is with me,—I am happy!" Soon after he died.

His brother Joseph followed him into eternity July 14th, 1811, being in his 75th year. For some time his health had been declining, and like the yellow full-eared corn ripe for the sickle, it was evident he was bending over the eternal world ; but the time when he was gathered into the garner was sudden and unexpected. The day on which he changed worlds was the Sabbath ; he had attended the house of the Lord twice on that day, and in the evening went down to the preaching at his son's house, at Holywell Green. He returned home in company with his friend Thos. Clegg, a class leader of considerable piety and judgment, but

had scarcely seated himself when the messenger of death arrived. He sunk down in his chair, sobbed for a few moments, and then exchanged the imperfect and transient service of an earthly sabbath, for a perfect and glorious sabbath of everlasting bliss.

“Servant of God! well done;
Rest from thy lov'd employ,
The battle fought, the victory won,
Enter thy master's joy.--
The voice at midnight came;
He started up to hear,
A mortal arrow pierc'd his frame;
He fell, but felt no fear.”

It was during the year 1773 or 1774 that Mr. Robert Emmett united himself to the society. He did not remain long a member of society ere he was selected as a proper person to take charge of a class; for a time he hesitated and it was not without considerable difficulty that he was prevailed upon to accept the office. His objections were removed by a remark made by one of the preachers, “and so brother (said he) you have determined to do so much for God and no more?” He instantly replied, “no Sir, I have made no such determination; but if God will bless me and make me a blessing to his people as a leader, here I am.” The Lord *did* bless him as a leader, and *he was made* a blessing to the people. His class soon ranked the foremost, and no single class has produced so many leaders, local preachers, and itinerant preachers as Mr. Emmett's. During the latter part of his life he met no less than

three classes, one of which met in Lister Lane, another in King-cross-lane, and the third in the vestry of the chapel.

For many years he took a very active part in the establishment of prayer meetings in the surrounding villages, uniting himself with the heroic band of prayer leaders for this laudable purpose. Though he did not mingle himself so much in the secular affairs of the church as his brother Mr. Richard Emmett, he yielded to none in his attachment to Methodism and his desire to benefit man. As a friend to and advocate for the poor his charity was characterized by our Lord's direction, "Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth," and it was not till after his death that the full extent of his liberality was known.

He quietly fell asleep in the arms of Jesus on Feb. 11th, 1818, and it is but justice to add, that as he loved Methodism in his life, so he loved it in his death. Its funds, to each of which he was for many years a regular subscriber, he took care should not suffer any loss by his decease.

We must again quote—"Sunday, April 17th, 1774, I rode to Halifax, (says Mr. Wesley,) such a country church I never saw before. I suppose, except York Minster, there is none in the county so large; yet it would not nearly contain the congregation. I was afraid it would be impossible for all to hear; but God gave me a voice for the occasion: so that I believe all heard, and many felt the application of those words, (part of the first lesson,) *Let me die the death of the*

righteous, and let my last end be like his. While I was at dinner at Dr. Leigh's, one came from Huddersfield to tell me 'the vicar was willing I should preach in the church.' Dr. Leigh lending me his servant and his horse, I set out immediately, and riding fast, came into the church while the vicar was reading the Psalms. It was well the people had no notice of my preaching till I came into the town. They quickly filled the church: I did not spare them, but fully delivered my own soul. Monday 18, the minister of Heptonstall sent me word that I was welcome to preach in his church. It was with difficulty we got up the steep mountain, and when we were upon it the wind was ready to bear us away. The church was filled, not with curious, but serious hearers: no others would face so furious a storm. At Ewood in the evening we had the usual blessing.

"Tuesday 19th, Mrs. Holmes, who has been some years confined to her bed, sent and desired I would preach at her house. As I stood in the passage, both she could hear, and all that stood in the adjoining rooms. I preached on Rev. xiv. 1-5. It was a refreshing season to her and to many. At half an hour after ten, I preached in the new house at Hightown, and in the evening at Daw Green."

We have proof in a preceding paragraph of the kind feelings entertained towards Mr. Wesley by Dr. Leigh, the then vicar of Halifax. At the time of Mr. Wesley's visit the Dr. was indisposed, therefore requested him to officiate in the church. That time is remembered by several good old christians now living, and the

writer cannot easily forget the interest which was excited in his mind while listening to the homely but eloquent statements with reference to that circumstance. One aged christian in particular, whose shrivelled features and tottering limbs spoke of the near approach to the tomb, was remarkably enlivened when a reference was made to Mr. Wesley's sermon in the Parish Church. Charging her memory she referred to and quoted the text, with several striking and prominent ideas in the discourse. The church, as Mr. W. notices, would scarce contain the congregation: not merely was the church itself, but the chancel and the anti-church completely, yea densely crowded, almost to suffocation, with attentive and serious hearers.

Nor did the vicar of Halifax only, but also the vicar of Huddersfield shew to Mr. Wesley true christian charity and brotherly love. It may be of interest to the reader to know a few particulars regarding a name which has previously been mentioned with respect, and who formed a conspicuous character in the times in which he lived.

The Rev. Mr. Venn was born at Barnes, in Surrey, in the year 1725: his father was a clergyman of considerable eminence, and the son being at an early age intended for the same profession, went through his academic studies with great reputation, and was elected Fellow of Queen's College, Cambridge. He was presented to the vicarage of Huddersfield about the year 1759. Worse than Egyptian darkness was the cloud which enshrouded the entire neighbourhood at that

time. Yet the vivid glow of holy and fervent usefulness dissipated the thick gloom, and bright glimmering rays of hope appeared ; hundreds and thousands flocked to his ministry and many "were the slain of the Lord." He was the means of introducing several valuable clergymen into this parish and neighbourhood, and assisted in no mean point of view in aiding that mighty revolution in religion and morals effected in this district. Nay, a celebrated writer has even observed "Mr. Venn's residence and ministry at Huddersfield, were not only productive of important results in a religious point of view, but in promoting civilization and laudable exertions for the temporal welfare of the neighbourhood. The truth of scripture has in all ages been verified :— 'righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people.' 'Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come.' True religion, while it purifies the soul, elevates the mind above degrading, licentious indulgencies, and directs its energies into an useful channel. To all human appearance, the parish of Huddersfield, even in a commercial point of view, would never have been what it is, but for the spirit of enquiry which was excited at the period now referred to :—for though our holy religion principally directs the attention to those things which are not seen and eternal, it inculcates principles which are the best bond of civil society, and enjoins such an use of the world, as will lead to every proper exertion for our own temporal good, and the welfare of all around us."

CHAPTER VII.

Revival in Halifax—zeal of the society. Miss Bosanquet—remarks upon her character, &c. Effect of the ministry of Messrs. Taylor and Brammah. Society at Elland. James Smith, of Bradshaw. Messrs. Allen, Waldron, & Smith. Erection of the second chapel in Halifax. Messrs. Hopper, Benson, and Lee. Extract from Miss Bosanquet's Journal. 1778, Mr. Wesley in Halifax. Messrs Johnson and Murlin. Birstal circuit—Elkanah Wilde. Disturbance in the society at Halifax,—its cause—consequences. Conversion of Mrs. Swaine. Good work in the neighbourhood of Luddenden,—John Sutcliffe.

WE have now brought our history to another important era. The cause of religion underwent a gracious revival in 1773, principally through the instrumentality of Mr. Thomas Taylor, who at that time was stationed in the Bradford circuit; together with Mr. William Barker and Mr. Thomas Tennant. The congregation at the old preaching-house continued to suffer little change, till the labors of these excellent men removed a measure of the odium which heretofore had rested upon the people; in fact, Mr. Taylor was the first man who attracted a regular and numerous congregation. The whole society was renovated, a fresh impulse was given, and the body discovered blessed symptoms of life and animation. The small preaching house was soon filled with attentive hearers, and awakenings and

conversions followed. The preaching of Mr. Wesley's assistants began to be prized, and such was the zest and appetite of the people for the ministry, that they frequently went in company to Elland, where service was held at eight o'clock in the morning ; the severity of winter did not prevent them, and not unfrequently did they hold a prayer meeting in the neighbourhood of Exley, at the hour of six, prior to the service at Elland. They would then attend the church at eleven, frequently proceed from thence to the preaching-house where a sermon was delivered in the interval of church hours. After that they heard the afternoon lecture at the Parish church, and being attached to the Methodist minister would sometimes follow him into Bradshaw, where service was performed in the evening. No wonder, when the people thus laid themselves out, that the work of the Lord revived. Miserable, indeed, must be the state of that society, where the conversion of sinners is a work sacred only to the christian ministry. It was not so with the Methodists at Halifax ! Perfectly convinced that the exercise of one talent will prove as efficacious, in its degree, as that of five, they determined, at least, to be "hewers of wood, and drawers of water." "Come with us, and we will do you good" was the invitation of each to his neighbour, and the chapel was now often filled to an overflow.

And yet, this flourishing period appears to have produced pecuniary embarrassment, for in the conference minutes there is an allowance of £15 15s. to the society at Halifax.

It is worthy of note that the society was this year (1773) favored by the presence of Miss Bosanquet, of Cross Hall, and whom Mrs. Spencer remembers hearing preach in the old chapel: she would not ascend into the pulpit, but stood upon the stairs. This lady, the reader is probably aware, became the helpmate of the immortal Fletcher. Being a lady of distinguished piety and ample fortune, her time and her talents were expended in benefitting her fellow creatures: collecting together, and supporting under her own roof, an extensive family composed of the afflicted, the indigent, and the helpless, but chiefly consisting of orphan children. Upon the subject of her call to preach the gospel she addressed a letter to Mr. Wesley, from whom she received an answer which may be perused with interest by the reader.

Londonderry, June 13th, 1771.

My dear sister,

I think the strength of the cause rests there, in your having an extraordinary call. So, I am persuaded, has every one of our Lay Preachers; otherwise I could not countenance their preaching at all. It is plain to me, that the whole work of God termed Methodism, is an extraordinary dispensation of His providence. Therefore I do not wonder, if several things occur therein which do not fall under ordinary rules of discipline. St Paul's ordinary rule was, "I permit not a woman to speak in the congregation;" yet in extraordinary cases, he made a few exceptions, at Corinth in particular.

I am, my dear sister, your affectionate brother,
JOHN WESLEY.

Much as it is to be feared that in many instances it

would be far better for "women to keep silence in the churches;" yet let it be remembered, in the present case, this eminent woman never abused an extraordinary call which she had received. Many were her conflicts, and many were the taunts she received. She at length opened her mind to Mr. Wesley in a letter, and was much comforted by the above answer. Her own modest and simple remarks upon this subject will be perused with interest.

Oct. 8th, 1777. I was to-day at Clackhightown, and saw the hand of the Lord in many things. I have been more abundantly led to reflect on the difficulties of the path I am called in. I know the power of God which I felt when standing on the horse-block in the street at Huddersfield; [see page 147] but at the same time I am conscious how ridiculous I must appear in the eyes of many for so doing. Therefore, if some persons consider me as an impudent woman, and represent me as such, I cannot blame them. Again, many say "if you are called to preach, why do you not do it constantly, and take a round as a preacher." I answer, Because that is not my call. I have many duties to attend to, and many cares which they know nothing about. I must therefore leave myself to his guidance who hath the sole right of disposing of me. Again they say, "Why do you not give out, I am to preach? Why call it a meeting?" I answer, Because that suits my design best. First, it is less ostentatious. Secondly, it leaves me at liberty to speak more or less as I feel myself led. Thirdly, it gives less offence to those who watch for it. Others object, "Why yours is a Quaker's call; why then do you not join them at once? You are an offence to us. Go to the people whose call is the same as your own: here nobody can bear with you." I answer, Though I believe the Quakers have still a good deal of God among them, yet, I think the spirit of the Lord is more at work among the Methodists; and while I see this, though they were to toss me

about as a foot-ball, I would stick to them like a leech. Besides, I do nothing but what Mr. Wesley approves; and as to reproach thrown by some on me, what have I to do with it, but quietly go forward saying, *I will be still more vile*, if my Lord requires it? Indeed for none but thee my Lord would I take up this sore cross. But thou hast done more for me. O do thy own will upon me in all things! Only make me what thou wouldst have me to be! Only make me holy and then lead me as thou wilt!

The writer would ill discharge his duty were he not to allude to that institution formed and carried on under her own cognizance, and supported and upheld at her own cost. Being cast out of her father's house at an early age, she took lodgings at Hoxton, and after spending two years in comparative retirement, exhibited a strong desire to make herself useful in her native village Laytonstone, in Essex. Many reasons rendered her removal to that place desirable, and she accordingly made arrangements for the education of destitute orphan children. In 1768 Miss Bosanquet removed with her family now consisting of thirty persons into Yorkshire. The declining health of an adopted sister and chosen colleague who had been the mainspring of the establishment, induced this removal, in the hope of a change of air producing recovery.

With regard to the establishment here referred to, Mr. Wesley's sentiments may not be uninteresting. In his *Journal*, he writes—"Thursday, December 12th, 1765, I rode over to Layton-stone, and found one truly christian family. This is what that at Kingswood should be, and would if it had such governors." Again "Thursday, February 12, 1767, I preached at Layton-

stone. Oh what a house of God is here! Not only for decency and order, but for the life and power of religion. I am afraid there are very few such to be found in all the king's dominions."

The young friend of Miss Bosanquet only survived her journey to Yorkshire two months. The prospects of this remarkable woman were somewhat clouded; she however took a house at Gildersome, and subsequently removed to Cross hall. Many were the orphans who found in her a parent. Several young women who had been educated in her establishment, were apprenticed to respectable trades in Halifax, and shewed by their subsequent lives, that the philanthropy of their patroness had not been exercised in vain. She was married to Mr. Fletcher, in November, 1781.

Elland had enjoyed the means of grace for many years, when Mr. Taylor commenced out-door preaching near the cross. Matthew Moorhouse (who occupied the house now inhabited by Mr. Wm. Peel) stands connected with the introduction of Methodism into this place; James Bintliffe, now in his 75th year, used to attend meetings there so early as 1765, and, according to his recollection, there had been meetings there for several years prior to that period; but not until 1773 does regular provision appear to have been made for preaching. Old Moorhouse afforded the requisite accommodation, and there was preaching at his house every Sunday morning at eight o'clock, and a prayer meeting every Saturday evening at eight o'clock.

The society at Bradshaw also received an addition to

its numbers of an individual, James Smith, who was afterwards an useful officer in the church, He received his first convictions at the age of twenty when he was led to hear a sermon by a young man from Bradford, of the name of Joseph Beanland, who preached at James Riley's, Bradshaw Row; this was in 1772. Soon after he heard another local preacher upon *I hearkened and heard but they spake not aright, no man repented him of his wickedness, saying what have I done.* "From this sermon I saw and understood (said he) that God takes special knowledge whether men repent or not, I went and retired into a private place and prayed 'Lord give me true repentance,' repeating the same words over and over again, till at last my heart was much softened and my eyes overflowed with tears." After laboring under deep conviction for some time, he at length found that peace which passeth understanding, and joined the society in 1773, receiving his first ticket at the hands of Mr. Taylor. The class in which he met was James Riley's, where he continued till his appointment in 1768, as assistant leader with Luke Shaw of the Holdsworth class; of which he was appointed sole leader in the year 1790. He sustained the office of a leader for 48 years, having under his care two, and sometimes three classes at one time; and died in great peace, March 28th, 1834, in the 82nd year of his age. As a leader he was of great value, and a peculiar trait of his character was the regularity with which he attended to his important duties.

In 1774, Mr. Brammah was stationed at Bradford, as

the second preacher. Under the combined efforts of Messrs. Taylor and Brammah, a revival of religion was experienced, and the society was soon in such a flourishing condition that a larger place of worship was deemed needful, and the old preaching house having become somewhat dilapidated, the leaders opened subscription lists to build a new chapel, leave for the erection of which was granted by conference in 1775. So numerous were the coagregations, who attended the Methodist ministry at this time, that Church lane was generally, on a Sunday evening, crowded with people unable to gain admittance.

During this revival Mr. Wesley does not appear to have visited the town, though we find from his Journal, that in July, 1775, he spent a few days at the residence of Miss Bosanquet, Cross hall, where he prepared for the Conference. On Sunday, the 30th, he preached under Birstal hill, and then proceeded to Leeds, where the conference began. Mr. Wesley visited Bradford the Friday following, and preached at Great Horton; on the Sunday he preached at Birstal and Leeds.

Mr. Taylor left the Bradford circuit highly respected and especially by his numerous friends at Halifax. His talents were of an high order, and his familiarity with the sacred writings, extraordinary: such was the estimate he formed of that pure source of truth, that there is sufficient ground to believe, he read the whole bible through upwards of fifty times, besides perusing portions upon numberless occasions. The circumstances of his death were peculiarly affecting. So suddenly did

he arrive at the borders of the valley, and so swiftly did he pass through, that he experienced little or nothing of the formality of dying. He was found one morning lying at his bed side, more than half dressed, his features perfectly composed, as in a quiet sleep : the chariots of Israel and the horsemen had come, and the prepared soul had ascended with the bright convoy. This was in 1816, Mr. Taylor being nearly eighty years of age.

The preachers who this year (1775) were stationed for the circuit, were Messrs. John Allen, J. Waldron, and Samuel Smith : though it does not appear that the latter ever came to Halifax. The good work which had already commenced was much forwarded during the residence of Mr. Waldron.

In the month of March prior to the last mentioned conference, Samuel Hodgson, a young man, was admitted into the society. Soon after he was called upon to exercise his gifts in prayer meetings, and about the latter end of 1777 he began to exhort in public. The society reaped the benefit of his exertions, as also of those of Joshua Keighley, his classmate.

Leave of conference having been granted for the erection of another chapel in Halifax, a piece of ground was purchased of Mr. G. Stansfield, of Leeds, for the sum of £110, and preparations for the chapel forthwith commenced. On Feb. 20, 1776, the foundation stone was laid ; the building proceeded but slowly, and not till Aug. 5th, in the same year, was the roof finished. Every praiseworthy exertion was made by the leaders, as well as private members of society in raising funds.

Honorable mention is required of John Hacking and James Cooke who stand pre-eminent among the list of collectors. From an old book now before me, it appears that the collectors extended their labors over a wide and extensive district, and that almost every private member nobly came forward, and if not by actual subscription, yet by manual labor, threw additional effort and weight in the scale—their zeal knew no bounds.

During the erection of the preaching house Mr. Wesley paid a visit to Halifax. "Thursday, April 18th, 1776, I clambered over the horrid mountains to Todmorden, and thence to Heptonstall on the brow of another mountain. Such a congregation scarcely ever met in the church before. In the evening I preached in the croft adjoining to the new house at Halifax. Friday 19, I preached at Smith-house, for the sake of that lovely woman, Mrs. Holmes. It does me good to see her; such is her patience, or rather thankfulness, under almost continual pain. Sunday 21, after strongly insisting at Daw green, on family religion, which is still much wanted among us, I hastened to Birstal church, where we had a sound, practical sermon. At one I preached to many thousands at the foot of the hill, and to almost as many at Leeds in the evening."

According to the Minutes of Conference, Messrs. John Allen, Thomas Lee, and James Hudson were the appointed preachers in 1776. The latter of whom (an ordained clergyman) commenced itineracy in 1769, and according to Mr. Myles, desisted from travelling while stationed in the Bradford circuit.

In 1777, the preaching-house, being finished, was opened, but I regret to be unable to state in what month. The Rev. John Wesley and Mr. Thomas Taylor preached on the occasion, and the collections at the opening, together with the money which had previously been subscribed, amounted to about £500. From the old book to which I have previously alluded, and in which the outgoings have been recorded with the most minute care and nicety, the expenses of the chapel amounted to the sum of £1230 10s. 4½d. exclusive of the price of the land : of this sum £499 16s. 3d. seems to have been paid by John Hacking, whose accounts extend to Sept. 1776 ; and £730 14s. 1½d. by Robert Emmett, the last item in whose account bears date Jany. 30th, 1779, and refers to candlesticks for the chapel.

The money which was advanced upon interest towards the erection of the chapel amounted to £600, and was lent by the following persons :—

JOHN HACKING	£100	ELKANAH WILDE	£100
JOHN HALLOWELL	£100	JOHN HOLROYD	£ 50
ROBERT EMMETT	£100	JOHN FOURNESS	£ 50
RICHARD EMMETT	£100		

The preaching house was consigned to Messrs. John and Charles Wesley, as a security for the Methodist body and Methodist doctrines ; that the building might not be alienated to any other purpose at any future time : a very wise and prudent caution, which it would have been well to have extended to the chapels afterwards erected in the circuit. This consignment was

executed by Mr. John Wesley and Mr. Charles Wesley, in the presence of John Atley, in the year 1780. The names of the original trustees were

John Hacking,	Isaac Wade,	W. Greenwood,
John Hallowell,	John Fourness,	Wm. Cooke,
John Holroyde,	James Riley,	Robert Emmett,
James Parker,	Jonathan Scholefield,	Richard Emmett,
		Elkanah Wilde.

It may be deemed necessary that a brief description of the chapel should be presented to the reader. The building was considerably less than the present erection, (the enlargement which took place in 1812, will be subsequently noticed,) in exterior appearance it certainly cast into the shade the present chapel, bearing no such heavy aspect as is produced by the extra wall which was deemed necessary to be built at the enlargement, in support of the roof, and by way of strengthening the west end, yet giving it an air of dullness, devoid of architectural neatness or display. The interior was plain and homely, consisting of two sides and one front gallery, the pulpit being affixed to the wall, with the singers' pew beneath, and the communion table in the front. There was no school-room or vestry attached, the present small vestry with the chapel keeper's house and rooms adjoining, being used as a dwelling-house for one of the preachers. Spacious burial ground was originally attached to the chapel.

The old chapel was made into cottages, and the gallery belonging to it purchased for the Baptist chapel in Haley-hill, by the friends who erected that place.

The following year (1777) we find the stationed

preachers for the circuit were Messrs. Hopper, Benson, and Lee. The second preacher had travelled but six years when he came into the circuit;—the writer is afraid to touch upon the character of one who rose to such an eminence in the christian world, lest the freshness of the laurel wreath be blasted by the breath of his praise.

Though Miss Bosanquet frequently visited Halifax, yet from the extracts of her journals, given in her life, there appears no formal record of such a circumstance. Nevertheless, the following extract is of too interesting a character to be passed over, more especially as a preceding paragraph has made allusion to what is therein recorded, and particularly as affording a fine expression of the christian feelings and conduct of this remarkable woman.

September 17th, 1777. Tuesday. Glory be to thee my faithful Lord! O that I could always trust! Then I should always praise! Last Sabbath morning I went according to appointment to Goker. [Golcar.] I arose early, and in pretty good health. The day was fine, though rather hot. About eleven we came to Huddersfield and called on Mrs. H. She asked me to lodge there on my return, and have a meeting, saying, many had long desired it, and there would be no preacher there on that day. I felt immediately the people laid on my mind, and that I had a message to that place, and said, if the Lord permit, I will. She then said "we will give it out at noon." We rode forward. Benjamin Cock met us, and kindly conducted us over the moors. When we came to his hut, all was clean, and victuals enough provided for twenty men! But I was so heated with the ride, (near twenty miles) and with the great fire on which they so liberally cooked for us, that I could not eat. My drinking nothing but water seemed also quite

to distress them. They said the meeting had been given out in many places, and they believed we should have between two and three thousand people. That I did not believe; but there was indeed such a number, and of such a rabble as I scarce ever saw. At one we went out to the rocks—a place so wild that I cannot describe it. The crowd which got round us was so great, that by striving which should get first to the quarry, (where we were to meet,) they rolled down great stones among the people below us, so that we feared mischief would be done. Blessed be God none were hurt! I passed on among them on the top of the hill, not knowing whither I went. Twice I was pushed down by the crowd but rose without being trampled on. We stopped on the edge of a spacious quarry filled with people, who were tolerably quiet. I gave out that hymn,—“The Lord my pasture shall prepare, &c.” When they were a little settled, I found some liberty in speaking to them, and I believe most heard. As we returned into the house numbers followed and filled it so full we could not stir. I conversed with them, but could not get much answer. They stood like people in a maze, and seemed as if they could never have enough. Many wept and said “when will you come again?” We then set off for Huddersfield. I felt very much fatigued and began to think how shall I be able to fulfil my word there? As we rode along, brother Taylor said—“I think I ought to tell you my mind. I wish we could ride through Huddersfield, and not stop. For I know there are some there, who do not like women to speak among them, and I fear you will meet with something disagreeable.” I looked to the Lord, and received, as it seemed to me, the following direction:—If I have a word to speak from Him, He will make my way. If not, the door will be shut. I am only to show the meekness of wisdom, and leave all to God. Those words then came with power to my mind:—

The Lord my pasture shall prepare,
And feed me with a shepherd's care;
His presence shall my wants supply,
And guard me with a watchful eye;
My noon-day walks he shall attend,
And all my midnight hours defend.

When we got to Huddersfield, I told them the conversation we had had by the way ; and the posture of my mind, which was as calm as the limpid stream and quiet as an infant. I perceived his fears were not groundless, and said "Well, my friends, I will do as you will, either stay with you this night, or go forward directly, for I follow a lamb-like Lord, and I would imitate his life and spirit." They said, they believed but few of the principal persons had any objection ; and the people much desired it ; besides, as it had been given out at noon, there would be a great many strangers whom it would not be well to disappoint. It was then agreed that we should have the meeting in the house, where they usually had the preaching ; but when we came there, the crowd was very great, and the place so hot, that I feared I should not be able to speak at all. I stood still and left all to God. A friend gave out a hymn, during which some fainted away. Brother Taylor said, "I perceive it impossible for us to stay within doors, the people cannot bear the heat, and there are more without than are within." We then came out. My head swam with the heat. I scarce knew which way I went, but seemed carried along by the people, till we stopped at a horse block, placed against a wall on the side of the street, with a plain wide opening before it. On the steps of this I stood, and gave out, "Come ye sinners poor and needy," &c. While the people were singing the hymn, I felt a renewed conviction to speak in the name of the Lord. My bodily strength seemed to return each moment. I felt no weariness, and my voice was stronger than in the morning, while I was led to enlarge on these words :—*The Lord is our Judge, the Lord is our Lawgiver, the Lord is our King. He will save us.* Deep solemnity sat on every face. I think there was scarce a cough to be heard, or the least motion ; though the number gathered was very great. So solemn a time I have seldom known ; my voice was clear enough to reach them all ; and when we concluded I felt stronger than when we began.

They then desired me to speak to each of the women joined in society, which took me till near ten. The room we went into for that purpose, was a damp stone floor, so that I could hardly move

my legs when I came out. But they kindled a fire, and after getting some refreshment I grew better. About twelve I went to bed and rested under the shadow of the Almighty till morning, when I found myself remarkably well. After having breakfasted with brother Goldthorp, where we had a lively conversation concerning holiness, I came home with much thankfulness and peace.

In 1778 the society was unexpectedly favored with Mr. Wesley's presence. He arrived at Halifax on Sat. Aug. 25.; the bellman soon circulated the joyful news, and though on the evening of the market day, Mr. W. preached to an overflowing congregation from *What hath God wrought*. In his journal he adds, "Sunday 26, the house was tolerably well filled at eight. Understanding there was great need of it, I preached on *Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's*: I spoke with all plainness, and yet did not hear that any one was offended. At one I preached on those words in the gospel for the day,—*Reckon ye yourselves to be dead unto sin, but alive unto God, through Jesus Christ our Lord*. Such a time I have not known for some years; the house was extremely crowded; but I believe there was not only no inattentive but no unaffected hearer." I am sorry that "there was a great need" for Mr. Wesley to bring a charge against the society, though unable to unravel the secret; the reprimand it seems was well received.

The conference in 1778 was held at Leeds when the preachers appointed for this circuit were Messrs. Hopper, Thos. Johnson, and J. Murlin. The latter preacher was much esteemed; he commenced the work in 1754,

and faithfully labored as an itinerant preacher till 1787 when, through heavy affliction, he was forced to become local. He was a man of great integrity; deep, sincere and ardent piety; and of such tender sensibility, when preaching the gospel, that he obtained the name of "the weeping prophet." This peculiarity impressed his memory in the various circuits wherein he travelled, and particularly so in Halifax. He died in 1799. The second preacher was every way calculated for the people among whom he was appointed. Though a plain, honest man, he was a faithful and affectionate pastor. After spending 78 years in the work of his Redeemer, the weary wheels of life stood still, and his happy spirit winged its way to paradise; October 1797.

The neighbouring circuit, Birstal, seems to have been in a flourishing condition this year, no less a number than 700 being added to the society.

An eminent character who interested himself much in the affairs of the society at this time was Elkanah Wilde: for many years he was a faithful and upright steward. "In season and out of season" he watched with parental solicitude the interests of the society, and always bearing a serene and cheerful mind he could not but produce beneficial effects by conversing with the members and the functionaries of the church. He died Jan. 18th, 1807, in the 62nd year of his age.

With respect to the chapel, I have already intimated the situation of the pulpit, which, (it must be added,) had two commodious pews on either side. For the sake either of ornament or use, a sounding board was

placed over the pulpit ; and several of the congregation thinking the board had a meagre appearance, hit upon a good scheme, as they thought, to remedy the defect. A subscription was opened, to which James Cooke and John Wade were the principal contributors, and an image of an angel blowing a trumpet placed over the sounding board. At the sight of so noble a figure with expanded wings and a tremendous trumpet in its hand the congregation might well be astonished when they assembled for public worship the Sabbath following its erection. Without adverting to this manifestation of a depraved taste, the angel became a subject of much contention in the society, which was extended not a little by Mr. Murlin's determination to preach no more under it. In the midst of this dissension however Mr. Wesley came to Halifax.

"Thursday, April 15th, 1779, I went to Halifax, where a little thing had lately occasioned great disturbance. An angel blowing a trumpet was placed on the sounding board over the pulpit. Many were vehemently against this : others as vehemently for it : but a total end was soon put to the contest, for the angel vanished away. The congregations, morning and evening were very large ; and the work of God seems to increase in depth as well as extent."

On the evening of the day in question, Mr. Wesley in order to settle a dispute which unhappily had been productive of no small evil, called the leaders together after service. The matter was gone into, and a hot discussion ensued, but when the votes were cast up

they proved to be equal. At this juncture John Hatton, of Lightcliffe, came into the room, and on the nature of the proceedings being explained to him, gave his vote for the destruction of the angel. Eager to execute the decision of the meeting, the angel in a few minutes disappeared from the sounding board; Mr. Murlin hewed "the dagon" in pieces, and before midnight his ashes were smouldering in the chapel yard! Mr. Wesley from his well-known antipathy against a sounding board intimated his wish that it might be removed. On the morning following, at the 5 o'clock preaching, great was the consternation of the people when they beheld the pulpit in its original plainness, being minus both the sounding board and its gorgeous appendage.

It is painful however to add, that the matter did not end here,—a division ensued, several influential members left the society, and in some instances remained through life disconnected with any particular church. Mr. Wesley appears not to have been fully aware of the extent of evil which had accrued from this contention. The angel had but been erected two Sundays.

Mr. Wesley proceeded on the following Sunday to Haworth where he preached at church in the morning, but in the afternoon, such was the vast assemblage of people that he was obliged to preach in the yard.

The year 1779 must close the present chapter;—Messrs. A. Mather, T. Johnson, and T. Briscoe, were the appointed preachers. Mr. Mather was the first married preacher taken into the connexion, and his

wife the first who was provided for by a regular fixed sum paid her by the Methodists. Before this arrangement, sometimes the stewards attended to the wants of the preacher's wives, and at other times overlooked them. *At all times* their provision was precarious.

A most interesting character joined the society at this time, one who afterwards became a personal friend of Mr. Wesley, and favored with his occasional correspondence. The mind of Mrs. Swaine, (a daughter of Mrs. Haigh,) was awakened to serious reflection by the sudden death of her husband, which occurred this year. While the early dissolution of so tender and intimate a union was most acutely felt, it was, by that God who remembers mercy even in his judgments, so overruled as to conduce to the sufferer's highest benefit, even the salvation of her soul. She continued to the day of her death, (Oct. 8th, 1826,) an ornament to her profession and a devoted disciple of her Lord and Master.

Before we close the present chapter it may be proper to notice, that the germ of a good work had begun to manifest itself in the neighbourhood of Luddenden, the chief instrument being John Sutcliffe. While residing under the roof of Mr. Lockwood, Ewood, he had frequent opportunities of hearing Mr. Wesley; eventually he met in a class which was formed at Ewood in 1774. In 1779 he removed to Pilling, in Midgley; he established a prayer meeting at his new residence, which speedily merged into a class meeting, John being appointed the leader.

CHAPTER VIII.

Joshua Keighley,—he goes out as a preacher. Samuel Hodgson. 1780, Mr. Wesley again in the neighbourhood. Mr. Mather—out door preaching. Rev. J. Fletcher preaches at Halifax. Messrs Bradburn, Floyd, and Oliver,—Mr. Floyd desists travelling. Methodism at Sowerby-Bridge,—John Walker, John Cooper, &c Messrs. Valton, Taylor, and Shaw. Halifax becomes the head of a circuit,—serious accident to the chapel by fire,—singular act of heroism. 1786, Mr. Wesley preaches at Halifax. Mr. Suter,—introduction of the Liturgy.

THERE had been a wish entertained for some time, that Joshua Keighley should enter fully into the work of the ministry, accordingly in the year with which we commence this chapter, 1780, he was called to fill one of the most important offices in the church. Were I at all to refer to his early life, there is a peculiarity in the circumstances wherein he received his first religious impressions, worthy of passing notice. He was a young man whose wildness of character rendered him somewhat conspicuous: one evening, after an engagement at the gaming table with a few jovial companions from whom he had won every wager, he singularly enough moved their adjournment to a prayer meeting in the neighbourhood. Laden with the spoil of the evening he led the way to this prayer meeting, and under these circumstances was roused to serious reflection.

The sufferings which he had to undergo while professing his firm attachment to Methodism were of no ordinary character and rendered still more poignant, as arising from a quarter the most distressing and annoying. Amid these storms of persecution he held fast the confession of his faith, the tempests that assailed him serving the more to exhibit the graces of the christian and bring out those fine qualities of mind for which he was distinguished. He has already been alluded to in a previous page as an exhorter, and it may be mentioned that prior to his receiving a regular appointment he had resided a short time at York, as a supply.

Northampton was his first circuit, and no small preparation was made for his outfit; his horse (for such an animal was indispensable for a preacher in those days) was kindly given by Mr. Walker. Mr. Keighley did not however labor long in his master's vineyard. His talents and theological acquirements will have ample justice done them, by the mere statement, that he received invitations to some of the first circuits in the connexion, and in several letters written to him by the most eminent preachers of his time, there is a respect paid to his commanding abilities.

After laboring for seven years he died at Elgin, in Scotland, Aug. 10th, 1787. Though Mr. Myles in his Chronological List, erroneously states his death to have taken place the year following. He died under circumstances peculiarly trying and distressing to others than his family connexions. My meaning will be best explained by the following couplet, which was originally

attached to a brief notice of him in the Minutes : he was

“About the marriage state to prove,
But death had swifter wings than love.”

There is a miraculous interposition of Divine Providence with reference to Mr. Keighley to which allusion must be made. I therefore extract from the Meth. Mag. for 1818, p. 206, the following narrative.

The Bristol Conference, for 1786, appointed Messrs. Joshua Keighley and Edward Burbeck to labour in the Inverness circuit. They met at Aberdeen and set off for their circuit together : when approaching within two miles of Keith, on that high hill which overlooks it ; in the dusk of the evening, about sun set, they beheld about twenty yards from them, a dark shade like a screen drawn right across the road ; they took courage, and rode up to it, which divided and opened like a two-leaf gate, and as they passed through an audible voice said, “you may pass on to your circuit, but shall never return to England.” This prediction was actually accomplished in the death of these two holy men of God, in the course of the year. They slept at Keith that night, and next noon arrived at Elgin, where I then lived ; [this account was written by a Mr. James Grey,] I called at their lodgings, found Mr. Keighley reading, and Mr. Burbeck had gone to bed, having rested none last night, owing to the thoughts of the vision and voice. Mr. Keighley then told me solemnly and seriously what I have related above. They continued to fulfil the duties of their ministry until the end of July, about the time of the sitting of conference ; when Mr. Keighley was seized with a brain fever, and died on the 8th day. Mr. Burbeck came four days after from Inverness, and lodged with me, until he received his appointment from conference ; he seemed anxious to get out of the circuit, if possible, to defeat the prediction ; in pursuing his journey to Keith he was taken ill four miles before he reached that village, and was carried thither sick of a fever, and died on the 9th day.

From a letter, now before me, written by this Mr. Grey, and dated Elgin, Aug. 24, 1787, there are some additional particulars relative to Mr. Keighley's death, Mr. G. then goes on to state, that

As there was no preacher on the spot, I took charge of his remains: wrapt them in fine linen (like his Lord and Master,) gave letters of invitation to ministers and magistrates: and a gentleman gave me the use of a tomb to bury him in. When he was at Inverness last spring he dreamed that he was condemned to die on the morrow. However he obtained leave of the Judge to go and acquaint his father of his fate, and to prepare him for the shock: which as soon as he had done, the Judge appeared to him again and said, "I have got you a short respite; but depend upon it, you shall die in Scotland." How unaccountable is this on the Infidel and Sadducean supposition? But how plain on that of a Christian.

The foregoing particulars will doubtless have been perused by the reader with deep interest and satisfaction, remembering their intimate relationship with a young man whose memory is yet cherished with esteem, and whose family connexions are still united to the society in Halifax, some of whom sustain even high and official characters in the church.

It is somewhat remarkable that the companion and friend of Joshna Keighley, (Samuel Hodgson,) should also be called, at the conference of 1780, to the York circuit. In the year 1795, April 20th, to the unspeakable grief of his friends he was drowned by the passage boat in which he was crossing the river Weare being capsized. Nine days after this melancholy event, his body was found on the coast uninjured, and the next day interred in the presence of an affected multitude.

Mr. Wesley was again in the neighbourhood during the year. Sunday, April 9, he preached at Birstal, and on the Tuesday following at Cross Hall. Sunday 23, "Mr. Richardson being unwilling that I should preach any more in Haworth church, providence opened another. I preached in Bingley church both morning and afternoon: this is considerably larger than the other.... After preaching at several other places on Monday and Tuesday, Wednesday, 26, I preached in Heptonstall church, well filled with serious hearers. In the evening I preached near Todmorden, in the heart of the mountains. One would wonder where all the people came from. Thursday, 27, I preached in Todmorden church with great enlargement of heart."

The affairs of the society in Halifax continued this year in a prosperous condition. Mr. Mather, when he officiated at the chapel, adopted the practice of out-door preaching in the afternoon, and one of the places where he usually took his stand was opposite the Union Cross Inn. The assemblage was at times very large, and there is reason to believe much good was effected. The local preachers also labored with great earnestness and zeal, and, along with several of the friends, were the means of keeping up the good feeling which had been experienced since Mr. Brammah was among them, by the holding of prayer-meetings in different parts of the town, other than the regularly appointed places. James Parker rendered himself so conspicuously useful in this respect, that these means of grace were commonly called "James Parker's prayer-meetings."

The colleagues of Mr. Mather were Mr. James Hindmarsh and Mr. John Fenwick; the former of whom resided at the chapel-house, and, according to Mr. Myles, commenced his itineracy in 1771, but was obliged to desist travelling in 1783. Mr. Fenwick was appointed to travel in 1755, and died in 1787.

There was an addition to the society, this year, of one who subsequently became one of its most influential members, the writer refers to John Fourness. Through a course of forty-one years' union with the church, he remained a steady and cheerful laborer.

There has been mention of another individual of the same name, in connexion with the erection of the chapel in 1777, (page 143) who must not be confounded with the Mr. Fourness just referred to.

Towards the close of July, 1781, Mr. Wesley, preparatory to meeting the preachers in conference at Leeds, made a tour through the West Riding, and on Thursday, the 26th visited Halifax and preached at the chapel in the evening, and the day following at Greetland chapel, on his way to Huddersfield, where after preaching again he retired to Longwood House, which he styles "one of the pleasantest spots in the county." Longwood House is situated about two miles from Huddersfield, and at that time was the dwelling place of Mr. Whitaker, a gentleman of some considerable property; here Mr. Wesley was invariably entertained when in the neighbourhood. In continuing his journal he writes, "Saturday 28th, I preached at Longwood House, at Mirfield, and at Daw Green. Sunday 29th,

I preached at eight, before the house. I expected to preach at one, as usual, under the hill at Birstal; but after the church service was ended, the clerk exclaimed with a loud voice, "the Rev. Mr. Wesley is to preach here in the afternoon." So I desired Mr. Pawson to preach at one. The church began at half an hour past two, and I spoke exceedingly plain to such a congregation as never met before. In the evening I preached at Bradford to thousands upon thousands, on *the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

The writer has the satisfaction of stating, that the Rev. John Fletcher visited Halifax during November, and preached in the Methodist Chapel one Monday evening: his visit was limited to a single night. Miss Bosanquet also visited the neighbourhood about the same time, and among other places, gave an exhortation at James Riley's, Bradshaw.

The conference appointment of preachers were Messrs. Samuel Bradburn, John Floyde, and John Oliver. Mr. Floyde commenced the itinerancy in 1770: he was labouring under a serious illness when Mr. Wesley visited this neighbourhood in the month of May, 1782. The following extract refers to the circumstance.—
"Monday 22, I preached about eleven o'clock in Todmorden church thoroughly filled with attentive hearers: in the afternoon at Heptonstall church: and at Ewood in the evening. Wednesday 24, the flood caused by the violent rains shut me up at Longwood-house, but on Thursday the rain turned to snow: so on Friday I

got to Halifax, where Mr Floyde lay in a high fever, almost dead for want of sleep. This was prevented by the violent pain in one of his feet, which was much swelled and so sore that it could not be touched. We joined in prayer, that God would fulfil his word, and *give his beloved sleep* : presently the swelling, the soreness, the pain were gone, and he had a good night's rest."

At the ensuing conference Mr. Floyde being unable to continue in the ministry, or from other causes, commenced his former practise as a Surgeon, in Northgate, though he preached for a time at Stainland Chapel. For want of business he was obliged to leave Halifax for Leeds : being again seized with illness, he came to reside with John Iredale, Exley, where he died. His remains are interred in the burial ground belonging the chapel, and on account of the solemn—the admonitory fact engraven on his tomb stone it is here transcribed.

In Memory of JOHN FLOYDE, M. D. obiit July 13th, 1799,
Ætatis 49.

Yet fled to happier climes, to realms of rest,
Where troubles reach not, nor alarms molest ;
Happy in Jesus, may thy generous mind,
Sequestered joy, in endless raptures find.

Also, Hannah his wife, who departed this life, July 26th, 1799,
Aged 33.

About this time Methodism seems to have won its way to Sowerby-Bridge, and the honored name which stands connected with its introduction is John Walker, a name ever dear to the followers of Wesley, in this particular district. He came to reside at Stern Mill

from the neighbourhood of Dewsbury, and immediately invited the local preachers to his house. John Hacking, Blakey Spencer, and others accepted the invitation and reared the standard of the cross without opposition and unmolested by a persecuting spirit. The soil was well prepared for the reception of the good seed; and it is pleasing to record, that the cause they espoused has to the present day flourished and prevailed, while the society generally speaking has been free from those internal disturbances which will be found to characterize some societies within the range of the observations of the writer. After preaching had continued for a while at Stern Mill, a class meeting was formed, over which Jeremiah Bastow, a local preacher, of Skircoat Green, was appointed the leader.

Certain circumstances afterwards induced Mr. W. to remove to Mearclough bottom, where, his purse being ever open to the support of the cause, he fitted up a commodious corn chamber for the use of the people, while his house was still open to the minister of peace. In that room many obtained the knowledge of sins forgiven. It is due to this eminent man of God, to observe, that he rendered essential services to the good cause till the latest period of a protracted life, which ended in peace, in the month of August, 1816.

The remembrance of Mr. Benson yet living in the minds of the people it may be conceived with what joy they received the appointment of conference—Messrs. S. Bradburn, T. Mitchell, and J. Benson, for 1782. The ministry of Mr. Mitchell was made a great blessing

to the people, having a plain and familiar style of preaching and a remarkable art of explaining some of the most important ideas in religion by the most plain and simple comparisons, he soon gained their feelings and affections.

The year following (1783) nothing of particular moment transpired, nor did the society seem materially to increase. The preachers were Messrs. A. Mather, J. Benson, and W. Dufton. It will be remembered that Mr. Mather travelled in the same circuit in 1780. His usefulness both to the society at Halifax, and to the connexion at large was very great. From his endowments both of body and mind and his perfect mastery of all the *minutiæ* of the doctrines and discipline of Methodism, he afforded Mr. Wesley considerable assistance in the superintendence of the societies.

At the conference of 1783, Matthew Lumb, Sowerby, was appointed to the Dales circuit. *Meth. Mag.* vol. 14.

During 1784 the society at Sowerby, then numbering three classes, received an accession of members in the persons of John Cooper and his wife, both now living in Sowerby Street, (the latter in her 84th year.) No sooner had they united themselves to the church than they felt a concern for their ignorant and benighted neighbours. But in the establishment of prayer meetings, and then preachings, at their house, they had to suffer severe persecution; an opposite neighbour, (the landlady of a public house,) being the chief instrument. It was a prevalent custom, when any new meetings were established in the country places, for a dozen, or

more, members to proceed from head quarters and give their assistance; even the distance of seven or eight miles was no object, such was their zeal and readiness to assist in the opening prospects of any new place. John Cooper's was of course remembered, and formed a rendezvous, for a time, of these pious pioneers.

The preachers who labored in the circuit during the year, were Messrs. Valton, Taylor, and Shaw. Mr. Taylor came into the circuit with considerable satisfaction, it unfortunately happened however that his labors and those of his colleague were rendered more arduous by the affliction of Mr. Valton, and by which he was confined almost the whole year, in fact, I am not aware that he went through the circuit once.

The conference being held at Leeds, the society at Halifax anxiously awaited the expected arrival of Mr. Wesley. Nor was their expectation cut off; on Friday July 9th, he preached at Huddersfield in the morning, at Longwood-house in the afternoon, and at Halifax in the evening. On the Sunday following he preached at Greetland chapel in the morning, at one o'clock and in the evening at Halifax. An immense concourse of people was assembled on this occasion, and a high wind only prevented Mr. Wesley preaching in the open air. On Monday he preached at Heptonstall, in the afternoon in Todmorden church, and at five in the chapel there.

On Sunday the 18th he visited Birstal and then proceeded to conference. Mrs. Swaine, and her sister Miss Haigh had attended the various services on the occasion. Mr. Wesley espying them at the close of the confer-

ence, intimated his intention of sleeping at their house that night; accordingly at the close of his sermon in the chapel he left Dr. Coke to dismiss the congregation, and drove off in his chaise to Halifax. On account of other pressing engagements he was unable to remain longer than a single night at Mrs. Haigh's, the next day he proceeded to Manchester.

1785. We have now arrived at the period in our history when Halifax had risen into sufficient importance to become the head of a circuit. The second preacher had for a succession of years resided here, and by the exertions of the friends accommodation was made for two. The first preachers stationed in the Halifax circuit were Messrs John Allen and Thos. Johnson, both of whom were much esteemed, having travelled in the Bradford circuit. The number of members was 974.

In the month of February, 1786, a serious accident occurred which had well nigh ended in the destruction of the chapel. From some cause or other the flues of the preacher's house caught fire, which speedily communicated with the chapel. The flames were discovered about midnight, by a stranger who was passing by at the time; he immediately gave an alarm, which extending to the town attracted many of the inhabitants to the spot. Providentially a large quarry situate at the bottom part of the grounds in front of Hope House, (immediately opposite the chapel,) was at the time full of water: had it not been for this circumstance, (and a long continued frost which had broken a few days prior) there is every reason to believe the chapel would have

been reduced to the ground. The inhabitants had hurried down a fire engine, but from the violence of the flames could render comparatively little assistance, a near approach being apparently impossible. After a painful suspense of several minutes, a gentleman—Mr. Joseph Bramley, at that time a Woollen Draper in the town—stepped forward and seizing the hose belonging to the fire engine, rushed into the chapel, and ascended the pulpit, dragging with him the leathern pipes. A general feeling was excited for his safety, the roof at the east end being apparently ready to give way. Mr. Bramley however maintained his post, and the engine was worked: thinking he could better subdue the fire he passed from the pulpit to the front edge of the side gallery, where he stood enveloped in smoke, the flames well nigh enclosing him. A shudder passed through the crowd when at intervals they beheld his dark form delineated by the bright blaze,—but there he stood! his shoes were burnt from his feet,—his toes were even scorched with the intense heat, but, (and to his everlasting honor let it be recorded,)—the dauntless hero shrunk not. His perilous situation gave him a good command of the flames, and after they were reduced others ventured into the chapel, and the fire quenched, not however before the greater part of the gallery had been consumed, many of the windows blown out, and the chapel otherwise materially injured.

The reader cannot but admire the promptitude with which assistance was afforded by the townspeople, who it must be remembered had discovered in previous times

feelings averse to Methodism. Mr. Bramley himself was neither a member of society nor an attender at the chapel, nay he was a relative of the man who is mentioned at p. 122. Many of the inhabitants also, whose prejudices to the cause were strong and violent, rendered the most timely assistance and were among the first to prevent the destruction of the chapel. Nor did they rest here, but voluntarily entered into a subscription for its restoration, and a sum of money was speedily realized more than sufficient for that purpose.

In the month of May, the society was again favored with Mr. Wesley's presence. These visits now began to be prized more than ever, from the evident fact that the days of this holy man were numbered. When his chaise rolled through the streets, an enthusiastic joy was excited; and when he preached, the rich and influential, as well as those in circumstances the antipodes of these, flocked to his ministry. Greater veneration for his name, higher respect for his character, never was manifested to an extent beyond that which the inhabitants of the town and neighbourhood exhibited. On Sunday, May 23rd, he preached at Haworth church in the morning: this must have been a pleasing circumstance to his mind, that he was permitted once more to occupy the pulpit of his old and deeply lamented friend, Mr. Grimshaw.

"On Monday, 24, I preached at Halifax: Tuesday, 25, at ten in Heptonstall church, (the ugliest I know) and in the afternoon, at Todmorden church. How changed are both the place and the people since I saw

them first. 'Lo! the smiling fields are glad! And the human savages are tame!' Thursday 27, I preached at Greetland at ten, and at Huddersfield in the evening. Friday 28, I preached at Longwood-house, the owners of which are a blessing to all the poor, both in spirituals and temporals." Mr. John Broadbent accompanied Mr. Wesley during this visit to the neighbourhood.

An exchange took place at the conference in 1786, in the appointment of the preachers. Mr. Johnson being succeeded by Mr. Alexander Suter, at that time a young man. Notwithstanding some little uneasiness which occurred after this appointment, the society subsequently deplored the removal of Mr. Suter, which took place at the close of the conferential year. The members of society now numbered about 1000.

The principal source of uneasiness arose from the introduction of the liturgy, or rather of Mr. Wesley's Abridgement, into all the chapels in the circuit. The congregation in the town had always shewn an attachment to the establishment, but this could not be said with regard to the country, the congregations there being unused to attend the church, (a custom arising rather from the lack of accommodation than inclination) and therefore unacquainted with the prayers. Thus while their adoption was hailed with delight in the town, the country places were generally averse to them and more especially did they consider them an innovation when read by Mr. Allen in his surplice and banns. At the close of the year they were discontinued, and since that time have not been re-introduced.

CHAPTER IX.

Mrs. S. Ashworth—her conversion. "Fiddler Thompson." Messrs. Goodwin and Parkin—new chapel at Sowerby. Introduction of Methodism to Southowram and Exley, —John Gilder, John Iredale. &c. New chapel at Luddenden. Five o'clock preaching. 1788, Mr. Wesley at Halifax, &c. Mr. Shaw,—Miss Hudson. 1789, Mr. Wesley preaches for the last time in Halifax,—1790, he preaches at Bradshaw,—awful occurrence. Mr. Wesley's decease. Messrs. Thompson and Entwistle. Brief allusion to the state of the connexion. Messrs. Atmore and Lomas,—revival at Skircoat Green.

IN commencing the present chapter it is the writer's pleasing duty to refer to the introduction of a member into the society, who in a subsequent part of her life became an eminent and conspicuous character in the church of Christ. Susanna, the wife of the late John Ashworth, Esq. had long been labouring under deep and severe conviction; being observed by Mr. Isaac Priestley, she was invited to a class meeting, where she obtained a clear manifestation of the pardoning love of God. A woman so constituted by nature and grace as was Mrs. Ashworth could neither be inactive nor uselessly employed. She subsequently became a class leader, and though the office was reluctantly accepted, she addressed herself to its duties with a devotedness, which, while it left no room for the influence of tempta-

tion, converted them, both to herself and others, into delightful privileges. To the grief of her partner, and to the loss of the society, she died Novr. 14th, 1831.

About 1786 I have information of a class meeting at the house of Jonathan Scholefield's, Sunny Bank, in the neighbourhood of Southowram, and which appears to have been the only one yet formed in that vicinity.

During Mr. Suter's appointment at Halifax, he was made the happy means of the conversion of a singular and noted character,—Joseph Thompson, or “Fiddler Thompson” as he was generally styled. This man was one of the most wicked, profligate, and abandoned characters; his life was one continued scene of pollution, and the “triumph of grace” in such a character excited the astonishment of the whole town. Some idea may be formed of his character by the perusal of the title of a work he published, (a curiosity in literature,) now very scarce,—“The singular life and surprising adventures of Joseph Thompson, of Halifax; in which is shewn among many other things, the hardships he endured under two cruel masters to whom he was apprentice; the wickedness of common Fiddlers and Fiddling: how he learnt to ride upon two or three horses at once; practised juggling; travelled with a pretended doctress; narrowly escaped death by hanging himself in a joke; was a fiddler for nine months on a cruize in a Privateer; his cruelty as a husband and a father, &c. Stating also how he came to forsake his sins and follies, and to fear and serve God, &c. Written by himself.” His conversion took place under

singular circumstances, a short time before Christmas. His treatment of his wife had become demoniacal, for the space of twelve years prior to that time he had never gone to bed in a sober state, and owing to terrible and aggravated cruelties, his wife determined upon leaving him. A poor, afflicted methodist, named Judith Briggs, being one of her neighbours, she went to make her complaints to her. Providentially Mr. Suter called to visit the sick woman; while relating her husband's cruel treatment, Mr. Suter felt interested in her behalf, and requested to see her husband: with difficulty he obtained an interview, Thompson with his companions having been engaged the whole of the day at the card table; "while Mr. Suter was talking to me, God sent every word with power to my heart that he spoke to me, so that I stood before him like a man that was trying for his life, and was found guilty, and was condemned." That hour he commenced a new course of life, a resolution was formed against drunkenness, the cards were thrown away, his companions forsaken, and determined to be free from temptation his fiddles were sold; he frequently met with Mr. Suter at Judith Briggs's, and evinced by his life and conduct the genuineness of his conversion. He became a zealous Methodist and with several others went round the country "into the highways and hedges," holding prayer meetings and establishing means of grace in dark and benighted places.

The conversion of Thompson was another instance of the power of the gospel to subdue the enmity of man's heart,—to raise him from the ruins of his fall, and make

him the participant of unsullied bliss. From a despicable sinner, he was raised to an estimable character, and though he retained the *cognomen* of "Fiddler Thompson" to the day of his death, he was highly respected by the society, sustained the office of class leader for a number of years, and always shewed himself hearty and zealous in the cause of his Redeemer.

The society at Sowerby having agitated for a considerable time the propriety of building a chapel, commenced about this time the present erection. In 1787 the preachers stationed in the Halifax circuit were Mr. John Goodwin and Mr. Jonathan Parkin. The number of members progressed during the year, being 1128.

During the present year the chapel at Sowerby was opened by Mr. Parkin and William Drake. The latter was a local preacher and lived at that time at Knowles, near Elland; he was a man of deep piety and well read, though at times his ideas were couched in language somewhat unfit for the cultivated ear, and his discourses intermingled with provincialisms.

The introduction of Methodism into Southowram must be ascribed to the conversion of John Gilder, a young man of good abilities, and who became an ornament to and useful member of society. I am unable to give the history of his conversion;—he was for a while a dauntless champion of the cross, but "the fine gold became dim." Were I to tear away the veil and discover the cause, it would only afford another exemplification of the fact, "they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts,

which drown men in destruction and perdition." When he resided at Southowram, however, continually singing his favorite verse

Captain of Israel's host, and guide
Of all who seek the land above,
Beneath thy shadow we abide,
The cloud of thy protecting love :
Our strength, thy grace ; our rule thy word ;
Our end, the glory of the Lord.

and not merely singing daily this fine, rich stanzas, but living in accordance with the sentiment it breathes, John Gilder invited the Methodist preachers to that wild and wicked population. William Drake was one of the foremost to sow the good seed, and was speedily succeeded by the itinerant preachers. A barn or laith was the best accommodation afforded to the congregation, and even then they were subject to the frequent interruptions of a mob. Mr. Goodwin feeling peculiar interest in the place, put forth considerable personal exertions, and after preaching had been established but comparatively a short period formed a class at Betty Wood's. This was on a Sunday morning, and no less a number than twenty two enrolled their names upon the class paper. Southowram was then taken into the extensive round of the prayer leaders, their visits to the cottages and hamlets were hailed with delight, and among those zealous individuals who expressed a lively concern for the welfare of the cause, and by these blessed means of grace endeavoured to fan and foster the enkindled flame, Mr. Richard Emmett, and the in-

defatigable Jonathan Saville stand pre-eminent.

Cotemporaneous with the introduction of Methodism into Southowram was its establishment at Exley. John Iredale is connected with this latter circumstance, and a singular anecdote occurs to the mind of the writer, with respect to what John had to suffer in taking upon himself a profession of christianity. His conversion took place at Elland, (his first convictions being received under a discourse preached by the Rev. Mr. Venn, in Elland church,) upon joining the small society, his temporal concerns were darkened and clouded, owing principally to his rigid determination to keep holy the Sabbath day. A custom had for a long time prevailed for the country people who came to church on a Sunday to leave a small basket at Iredale's shop, that when service was concluded they might carry home the produce of the grocer's shop. The shopkeeper however gave notice he would take in no more baskets on the sabbath, and the consequence was,—his customers left him. This was a severe trial, and must have tested the firmness of his principles: the storm however was of short duration, the darkened mass of clouds were ploughed up and scattered, and ("does Job fear God for nought?") his business increased.

A few years subsequent to this he left Elland, taking up his abode at Copriding, near Jagger Green, where he became the leader of a class at Bradley Mill. In 1787, he removed to Exley, and immediately opened his house for the preachers, fitting up a large room for the purpose. I am unable to give a reason why the

Salterhebble class left their leader John Brooksbank at this time, and formed a class at Exley, nominating John Iredale as leader in future. The prayer meetings and preachings were continued till 1823, when they were given up in favor of Salterhebble, being after the death of John Iredale and his wife. Salterhebble had not been void of the means, the prayer meetings were continued, and a new class formed of which Stephen Broadbent, (a pious man, who though in a distant land yet lives in the remembrance of many,) was leader.

It is pleasing also to notice, that in a different part of the country Methodism was this year established under favorable auspices. John Sutcliffe (p. 152) being called upon to visit a dying man at Luddenden, after affording him necessary advice could not avoid noticing the eligibility of an old building of his in the village as being well adapted for a small chapel. The old building was accordingly appropriated for the purpose and opened this year. John Sutcliffe's class was brought down from Midgley, he himself came to reside under the chapel; a society was thus established, and a preaching house, measuring 12 yards by 7, obtained upon easy terms. The preachings were removed in 1811 to the present commodious chapel, but John Sutcliffe (in his 83rd year) still occupies the old preaching house.

During 1787 there appears to have been a departure from an established usage of Methodism, not an entire departure probably, but considerable inattention to the five o'clock morning preaching. I am not aware that the circumstance can be accounted for in a better man-

ner than by a reference to the remarks of Mr. Myles upon the subject.

“Two very weighty reasons led Mr. Wesley to establish preaching at five o'clock in the morning, in the first period of Methodism: 1. The disturbances which the congregations generally met with in the evenings, from rude, lawless mobs. The service was often interrupted by them, so that they were under the absolute necessity of meeting early in the morning, before the rabble had time to collect together. 2. There were very few itinerants, the societies were visited, at most but once a fortnight, frequently but once a month; and sometimes the preachers were longer in the return of their visits to the people: so that when they preached in the evening, they generally preached the morning following. And the people willingly got up to hear them and were profited by so doing. But, as the preachers increased, and the societies had regular worship established among them, they were not so forward in attending five o'clock preaching. As the causes did not exist which led to it, the effects began to cease.”

The society was not favored with the presence of Mr. Wesley till 1788. “Sunday, April 27, I preached at Haworth church in the morning, crowded sufficiently, as was Bingley church in the afternoon; but as very many could not get in, Mr. Wrigley preached to them in the street, so that they did not come in vain. In the evening we went on to Halifax. Monday 28, the house in the evening was thoroughly filled with hearers that devoured the word. Tuesday 29, I was desired to

preach in the church at Sowerby, four miles from Halifax: it stands on the brow of a high and steep mountain. Rich and poor flocked together to it, whom I exhorted to *Acquaint themselves with God and be at peace.* I found much liberty of spirit among them; and still more at Halifax in the evening, when it seemed as if the windows of heaven were opened; as also at five in the morning, when I took a solemn leave of this affectionate people. . . Wednesday 30, I preached at six in the evening at Huddersfield, where our brethren are now all at peace and unity with each other. In the evening I went to our quiet retreat at Longwood-house.

“Sunday, May 4, the concourse of people at Birstal about four (in the afternoon) was greater than ever was seen there before: and the wind being very high, it was feared not half of them would be able to hear: but God was better to them than their fears: afterwards we found that all could hear distinctly; so if they hear me no more, I am clear of their blood. I have declared to them the whole counsel of God.”

The late Mr. Stansfeld, of Fieldhouse, was the gentleman who invited Mr. Wesley to preach at Sowerby church. Indeed the curate of that church, the Rev. Mr. Ogden, was deeply attached to Methodism. It was his frequent custom to proceed from the church, at the conclusion of the afternoon service, to the service at the Methodist preaching house, and listen with evident satisfaction to the sermons of the local preachers. This friendship, which was not of short duration, produced the most pleasing effect.

Mr. Parkin the second preacher, was succeeded in 1788, by Mr. John Shaw. The society had suffered some little declension in numbers, standing at 1100. The conference, which was held this year in London, was remarkable for the publication of a pastoral address or letter to the societies, being the first of the kind published by Mr. Wesley.

Among the characters who at this time were added to the society, to adorn it by their lives and conduct, must be noticed a lady upon whom the writer is prevented passing that eulogium which her relation and long standing in the church might otherwise demand. Miss Mary Hudson had long been a subject of divine grace, and at the risk of great personal inconvenience, arising from a quarter the most painful and annoying, she was induced to brave all and become a member of the Methodist society. From the fact of her superior attainments, her finely constituted mind, her deep and ardent piety, she promised well for the church, nor have the expectations of that church been disappointed. In her youthful vigour she became the instrument of disseminating great and lasting good, many are the souls which shall rise up "at that day" and announce her as the instrument of their salvation. As maturer age advanced, she felt a deeper and more earnest concern for the welfare of the society, rejoicing with those that rejoiced, sorrowing with those who were in tears. Her disposition being always averse to melancholy, and praise ever flowing from her heart, both preachers and official members have been benefitted by her counsels,

her prayers, her advice.

When Miss Hudson first united herself to the society her mind was considerably perplexed on account of her inability to attend the evening class meetings. Making known to Mr. Goodwin the disadvantages under which she laboured, he established, principally on her account a class at his own house on a Monday afternoon. From that period afternoon class meetings have been held with great benefit and to the evident advantage of the members, as it regards the time of their assembling. Nor can the writer pass on without affording a tribute of respect to his affectionate and endeared friend, remembering the many delightful hours spent in her company. It is not easy to sketch the feelings which steal upon the mind while conversing with an aged christian, lifted from the world, detached from earthly entanglements, viewing the grave with composure, and beholding death with a smile. Delicacy forbids the mention of many interesting circumstances in her life and experience.

In the following year, 1789, Mr. Wesley visited Halifax for the last time, as recorded by himself. In his journal we read, "Monday, July 20th, I went on to Halifax, where in the evening I preached to a noble congregation, and afterwards spent nearly another hour in exhorting the society. . . . The Sunday following I preached at noon in Birstal house to as lively a congregation as ever was seen there, and at five preached on the education of children." In the evening of the Monday just mentioned a vast assembly of people con-

gregated in the preaching house at Halifax, to whom Mr. Wesley gave an exhortation of a most affectionate and touching character: the principal feature of which was an earnest desire that his people should ever maintain membership with the establishment; to this there was a spontaneous assent, for the inclinations of the people prevented any other than an adherence to such a request. It was a solemn time; they were as one vast assembly of children, whose patriarchal parent, with silvered locks and aged tottering frame, stands in the midst, and before taking his final leave and bidding farewell, affords his dying advice, beseeches them to love one another, to heed his commands, and then blesses them. He left the town the morning following to prepare for the conference, at Leeds.

Mr. Goodwin having travelled two years in the circuit was succeeded by Mr. Wm. Thompson, in 1789. He commenced preaching in 1757, and continued his itinerancy for upwards of forty years. Upon his appointment to Halifax, the society was in a quiescent state, and their numbers the same as last year.

At the conference of 1789 John Denton, a young and pious man, began to itinerate, receiving an appointment for the Chester circuit. And it is my duty also to record the entrance of another young man upon the lists of the travelling preachers,—Robert Crowther. He was born at Booth Town, near Halifax, in the year 1762, and it appears that under a sermon preached by Dr. Coke was awakened to a sense of his state by nature. Two of his elder brothers, Timothy and Jonathan

went out in 1784, and being taken into full connexion at the conference of 1789 they sent for their brother Robert. He immediately repaired to Leeds and after mature deliberation gave himself into the hands of conference. He then returned home and in November was instructed to proceed to the Norwich circuit, where he was received with great affection and kindness.

There is a blank during part of the month of April, 1790, in Mr. Wesley's Journal owing to part of the MSS. being lost. I am glad to afford some little information to fill up that chasm. Mr. Wesley having proceeded into Yorkshire from the last place mentioned before the omission to which I have referred. Though he did not actually visit Halifax, yet he preached in the chapel at Bradshaw on a Monday morning in May : the announcement having been made at Halifax the day preceding, a congregation more than sufficient to fill the chapel assembled at the hour of ten, but owing to the increasing infirmities of Mr. Wesley he was unable to reach the chapel till the hour of one, during which interval the congregation remained in the chapel with the greatest possible patience. When he arrived, the scene was truly affecting. The venerable saint accompanied by Mr. Bradford and Mr. Thompson ascended the pulpit stairs, and the congregation fully sensible that they were looking upon one they should see no more in the flesh, burst into tears. Mr. Wesley himself was affected, and the feelings of every one were afresh excited when they beheld him who had been "mighty in words," now requiring the aid of a friend to whisper

in his ear the heads of his discourse. Such were his infirmities, being eighty-seven years of age, that he was obliged to be supported by the two ministers in the pulpit, and more than once his memory entirely failed him so that their help was necessary to the continuing of his discourse. After service he either returned in his chaise to Haworth, or else proceeded to Bradford, I am unable to ascertain which; but it appears he did not visit Halifax.

An awful occurrence took place on this day, which demands historic record. A considerable group of persons was assembled near the chapel anxiously waiting Mr. Wesley's arrival, but a considerable time having elapsed without any signs of his approach, a woman in the crowd, of the name of Wilson, mocked the patience of the expectant multitude by shouting—"they are looking for their God, but he does not come!" She had no sooner uttered this sentence than she fell speechless to the ground and died the following day.

It is now our painful business, our melancholy duty to take leave of one whose visits to this neighbourhood cannot but have been read with pleasure and satisfaction. Mr. Wesley continued engaged in the ministry till within a few days of his death. On New years' day, 1790, he observes, "I am now an old man, decayed from head to foot. My eyes are dim: my right hand shakes much; my mouth is hot and dry every morning. I have a lingering fever almost every day. My motion is weak and slow;" and yet he observes at the same time, "I do not slacken my labor; I can preach and

write still." And thus he went on, till the mind, with all its vigor, could no longer uphold his worn out and sinking body. Its powers ceased, although, by slow and almost imperceptible degrees, to perform their sundry offices; until as he often expressed himself on similar occasions, "the weary wheels of life stood still at last," being one of those rare instances in which nature, drooping under the load of years, sinks by a gentle decay.

A few minutes before ten o'clock on Wednesday morning, March 2nd, 1791, while several of his friends were kneeling around his bed, without a lingering groan—he died.

The news of Mr. Wesley's death was received in Halifax, by every token of grief. The chapel was immediately hung with black cloth, and for that purpose no expense was spared. The front of the gallery was completely hung round and festooned; the pulpit, singer's pew, communion table, &c. being also covered with habiliments of mourning. The large east window immediately behind the pulpit was covered with black cloth, on which was a full length portrait of Mr. Wesley, and beneath it the favorite passage—"am not I a brand snatched from the eternal burning." The whole presented an appearance not easily described. A deeply impressive sermon was preached by Mr. William Thompson, and the whole of the congregation and society, poor as well as rich, expressed their heartfelt sorrow by wearing mourning. The chapel continued hung with black for the space of a year.

In noticing the concerns of the society, we must observe that in 1790, the colleague of Mr. Thompson, was Mr. Joseph Entwistle, who then had travelled three years in the connexion. The society stood at the somewhat singular number of 1111, having the small increase of eleven during the past year.

After the death of Mr. Wesley, unhappily, certain grievances arose in the connexion, the evils of which extended to Halifax. I am aware that questions which now arose had been agitated before, but the feeling had not been diffused over so wide a surface, as was manifest at this time. Preachers alike with the people were affected, and while some who were deeply attached to what was called the *old plan*, or a strict connection with the church establishment, strongly insisted upon that plan being adopted, others as strenuously argued for the contrary. The society at Halifax were generally more favorable to the established church than otherwise: its wealthy members, as well as numbers of the leaders and official men, were all connected with the establishment; hence they regarded with jealous apprehension any infringement upon what they considered constitutional Methodism. This fact being kept in mind will account for the uneasiness which afterwards transpired.

During the sitting of the conference in 1791, over which, being the first since the death of Mr. Wesley, the superintendent of the Halifax circuit, Mr. William Thompson, was called to preside. A plan was adopted to supply the want of Mr. Wesley's superintendence, by the institution of local authorities, or what was

termed district assemblies. Into the nature of these district assemblies or meetings, it is foreign to my purpose to enter. The three kingdoms were divided into districts, England comprising nineteen, Scotland two, and Ireland five. Halifax having assumed considerable importance was placed at the head of a district, comprising Colne, Keighley, Bradford and Huddersfield. The preachers stationed for Halifax were Mr. John Pawson and Mr. Entwistle, the former being also chairman of the district. There appears to have been but a slight increase of four members during the year; the state of the society was certainly dull and flat, but the reason cannot easily be assigned.

Upon the arrival of Mr. Pawson to the circuit, great ill will was excited and bad feeling engendered; considerable soreness was manifested towards him in particular, on account of the innovation he made in the order of the services, and his preaching during church hours. Several of the class leaders gave up their books, and what rendered the appearance of things much worse, was, the attempt which Mr. Pawson also made to administer the sacrament in the chapel, at which time he preached in a gown with bands. Here was an unpardonable crime, and though the murmurings did not actually break forth into open rebellion, they rankled in the hearts of the people for two or three subsequent years.

Mr. Entwistle having been stationed the allotted time in the circuit, was succeeded in 1792 by Mr. Robert Lomas, whose reception by the people was flattering.

In 1792 the members of society were 1124.

It will be necessary to review the state of the connexion generally during this year, the pulse of the Halifax society beating in unison with the general body. The uneasiness previously referred to as existing in the connexion, was prominently brought to bear upon the question of the ordinances. The contention upon this topic had increased to a great extent throughout the body. Mr. Wesley having been accustomed to administer the lord's supper to the societies in his annual visits, the loss of this privilege was an additional inducement to those who contended for the more liberal plan. The preachers were divided in sentiment upon the subject, and abhorring the idea of a division in the society, they were perplexed and knew not what to do. If they granted the favor, or refused the privilege, whichever plan they adopted had this unhappy consequence appended to it, a division would ensue. An address published by them to the people so fully explains their decision upon the matter, that its insertion will doubtless be deemed of interest, and will explain after circumstances.

To the Members of our Societies, who desire to receive the Lord's Supper from the hands of their own preachers.

Very dear brethren,

The conference desire us to write to you in their name in the most tender and affectionate manner, and to inform you of the event of their deliberations concerning the administration of the Lord's supper.

After debating the subject time after time, we were greatly divided in sentiment. In short we knew not what to do, that peace

and union might be preserved. At last one of the senior brethren, Mr. Pawson, proposed that we should commit the matter to God by putting the question to the lot; considering that the Oracles of God declare that "the Lot causeth contentions to cease, and parteth between the mighty;" and again that "the Lot is cast into the lap, but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord." And considering also that we have the example of the Apostles themselves, in a matter which we thought, all things considered, of less importance.

We accordingly prepared the lots, and four of us prayed. God was surely then present, yea, his glory filled the room. Almost all the preachers were in tears, and, as they afterwards confessed, felt an undoubted assurance that God himself would decide. Mr. Adam Clarke was then called on to draw the lot, which was "you shall not administer the sacrament the ensuing year." All were satisfied. All submitted. All was peace. Every countenance seemed to testify that every heart said "It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good." A minute was then formed according to the previous explanation of the lots, that the sacrament should not be administered in our connexion for the ensuing year, except in London. The prohibition reaches the clergy of the church of England as well as the other brethren.

We do assure you, dear brethren, we should have been perfectly resigned, if the lot had fallen on the other side. Yea, we should as far as christian prudence and expediency would have justified, have encouraged the administration of the Lord's Supper by the preachers; because we had not a doubt but God was uncommonly present on the occasion, and did himself decide.

Signed in behalf of the Conference,

ALEXANDER MATHER, President.

THOMAS COKE, Secretary.

On the reception of the address general satisfaction reigned throughout the society at Halifax, and the members settled down into peace and quietness. The

number of members did not materially increase ; but the work of grace deepened and widened in their hearts ; and it may be observed that in financial affairs they were generally free from embarrassment.

Before we dismiss the present chapter we must allude to the appointment of 1793, when Mr. Pawson was succeeded by Mr. Charles Atmore, Mr. Lomas still remaining in the circuit. A good work seems already to have begun in some parts of the circuit, and at Skircoat Green in particular. Mr. Pawson was the means of arousing a general enquiry after religion in that place, and on Mr. Atmore's first quarterly visitation after his appointment it was his happiness to add thirty-six members to the society in that village.

CHAPTER X.

Memorable revival in 1793,—letters from Mr. Atmore and Mr. Lomas,—blasphemous conduct of a troop of itinerating players—spirited conduct of the townspeople. The sacrament question—spirit of discontent. Petition to conference—painful state of affairs. Messrs. Pritchard and Gibbons. William Walker—marvellous relation. Messrs. Thom and Sutcliffe. Seeds of discontent are sown—an address—a division ensues. Mr. Thom leaves the connexion. Messrs. Taylor and Miller.

IT is pleasing to refer to those periods, wherein through the instrumentality of God's servants, a revival of religion takes place. And though there may be slight irregularities attendant upon these seasons of manifestations from on high, the mind of the christian is disposed to contemplate such times as the bright periods of the church's history; periods wherein Satan's kingdom is assailed by an overwhelming force, and such an outpouring of the spirit experienced that sinners tremble and shake,—the awakened penitent, heedless of shame, shouts aloud for mercy,—and believers stripped of all self and pride, give praise to the Lord of hosts in a manner which fails not to attract the malice of the lukewarm—the scorn of the world. It was the happy lot of Halifax to be favored with a revival in 1793 such as it had seldom experienced, a revival which vibrated

not merely through the whole society, but extended to the neighbourhood; and eventually, the north of England was visited with an outpouring of the Holy Ghost, rendering the period about which we write, a perfect epoch in Methodism. On this account it is deemed necessary to afford every particular relating to the history of so remarkable a period.

The chief instrument in this revival was Mr. Robert Lomas, and the place where it commenced, Greetland chapel. A week prior to that memorable time a great work seems to have been wrought in Mr. Lomas's mind; his own account of it is as follows:—"Saturday (in June) before private prayer in the forenoon, I was led to think much about my indifferency, unfaithfulness, and wanderings, and the causes of these things; I concluded that my heart was not so much devoted to God and his work as it ought to be, and that I wanted a great salvation. For some years I had seen the possibility and necessity of *entire* sanctification; and that it was the work of God, and obtained by faith, and therefore might be granted in one moment. Now these things rested with uncommon weight upon my mind, and I was much drawn out to pray that the Lord would cleanse me from sin. I cried to the Lord with many tears and strong wrestlings, Oh! Lord. I beseech thee, deliver my soul. It was not long before my soul felt a calm, and a sinking before God, conscious that he must do the work, or it must be undone: then my faith grew stronger, and my soul waited for his salvation. In a very little time I could rejoice in God with joy un-

speakable and full of glory. I knew, I felt that he had entire possession of my heart, and that he was all my own. I found unspeakable pleasure in repeating the words of the Psalmist, *I am thine*, I am thine, thine! I am thine! I cried again and again, and my soul was filled with rapture, Glory be to God for his mercy! May I praise him with my latest breath, and to all eternity! Amen."

About a week after the time just mentioned, on the 23rd of June, he held a lovefeast, at Greetland. His own account of that special season shall in the first place be afforded to the reader. "As I was going to the place, and after I arrived there, I was led to enquire 'What can I say to do the people good?' I committed myself to God, and I hope, he directed me in the choice of subjects. I found liberty in preaching but nothing out of the common way. In the love-feast I bore my feeble testimony to the truth, and spoke explicitly of my own experience; saying, for some time I have found nothing contrary to the love of God and man, and as far as I know, the Lord has cleansed me from all sin; but of this I want a clearer witness. What was said seemed to have a good effect upon the people in general, they were evidently stirred up to lay hold upon the Lord. I was desirous to spend a little time in prayer, and requested several of the brethren to use their liberty. They did so, pleading with God for themselves and others. I found myself uncommonly affected while one of them was praying for me. With my whole heart, with all the powers of my soul

and body, I then cried to the Lord for a general blessing. As I prayed and pleaded, my faith was strengthened, and I said, 'Oh Lord, if it will not displease thee, we would wrestle with thee, as Jacob did; and with Jacob thou wast not displeased, &c.' Immediately my whole frame felt the power of God, and the whole house seemed filled with his glory. I continued praying, or rather praising God. My soul was lost and swallowed up in him. I had before been blessed in a similar way; but never in that degree." The people were amazed, some glorified God; meanwhile the gracious influences waxed stronger and stronger, each individual felt to forget every thing, save their eternal interests. The world receded from their view, Satan lost his hold, evil agencies found nowhere whereon to fasten; faith being strongly exercised, a wrestling spirit filled every heart, while every power both of body and mind seemed to be engaged. Then the gates of heaven were opened, the glory of the holy one of Israel filling the very place, and by some now living and by hundreds transplanted to paradise, Greetland Lovefeast will never be forgotten. Many found that peace which passeth understanding, many more proved the full efficacy of the atonement. The chapel was divided into small companies of praying souls, while amid these little bands penitents were groaning for deliverance. The solemn song of thanksgiving was at times mingled with the sinner's cry—"Ah wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me?" Prayer for pardon, and a shout of praise for forgiveness ascended together. Every tongue was

unloosed—every heart touched ; and after continuing together to a protracted hour the meeting was with great difficulty concluded.

The good which had already been done did not end here ; each individual returned to their homes with the holy fire burning and glowing in their hearts. With zealous simplicity they related the great and mighty wonders the Lord had done for their souls ; many believed their testimony, others were prevailed to seek the same mercies. The fire stole from heart to heart and speedily the whole circuit was under a similar influence. As might be expected, every Methodist found employment ; prayer meetings were resorted to with unspeakable ardour, and not unfrequently were they kept up through the whole of the night. The chapels were crowded, and the general inquiry was, “ what must I do to be saved ? ” The following letter was addressed to Dr. Coke, and appeared in the Magazine at the time.

My dear Brother,

The great work of God in Halifax circuit and its neighbourhood, is almost indescribable ; I scarcely know how to relate the circumstances thereof. It began at Greetland, which for many years had been proverbially dead, so that the preachers had often serious thoughts of entirely giving it up. It was in a lovefeast that an uncommon measure of the spirit of prayer was given to my dear fellow labourer, brother Lomas, and also to many of the people. The power of God descended in an extraordinary manner ; and the spirit of life from the Holy One visited many mournful hearts with peace and love, and enabled them to return home rejoicing in the God of their salvation. When these persons returned to their respective societies, and related the great things which the Lord had done for their souls, many believed in their testi-

mony, and were excited to seek, with greater diligence than ever the same mercies ; and in a little time the work spread into several other parts of the country.

We have added about seven hundred persons in our circuit since last conference ; the far greater part of whom, there is reason to believe, are truly converted to the Lord, and can rejoice in him as their Saviour and Redeemer. The work has commonly been carried on in prayer meetings : which were singularly owned of God. Frequently ten, fifteen, or twenty souls, were either justified or fully sanctified at one of these meetings. Very often, while one of the brethren was earnestly engaged in prayer, the power of God descended, and some began to be deeply affected, and cried aloud for mercy. Many were much agitated in their bodies, and even fainted away. The cries of others were very great indeed, and they remained in distress for several hours, till they were sensibly delivered from their misery, and enabled to rejoice in God. It has been no uncommon thing for six, eight, or ten persons to be in distress together, in the same room. In these cases our friends continued in prayer with them, till they were brought into the liberty of the children of God. I have conversed with some hundreds of them, and have been surprised to hear the clear and distinct account which they gave of the work upon their souls. Some have now evinced the reality of the change upon their hearts, for twelve months, by a holy life ; so that the mouths of gainsayers are stopped. I hope this work will spread over the whole earth !

I am your truly affectionate Friend and brother,

June 20th, 1794.

CHARLES ATMORE.

The writer has also great pleasure in inserting a letter written by Mr. Lomas, and for the first time made public.

The works of the Lord are great, sought out by all those who have pleasure therein. He generally works at those times and by those means which will cause his hand to appear most evidently ; doubtless that he may have the greater glory. Profane persons

who seemed to defy Omnipotence itself, are made monuments of grace : and places which might fitly be compared to wildernesses are made to bud and blossom as the rose. This was the case in a peculiar manner at Greetland, when the late revival of religion in Halifax circuit first began. The chapel was not built in a situation favorable for gathering a congregation, and the preachers labored for several years with very little prospect of success. In the years 1791 and 1792, God blessed and honored Mr. J. Entwistle's ministry, to the awakening of a few who lived at a little distance from the place. These came and brought some of their neighbours so that the number of hearers was considerably augmented. But in the year 1793 the Lord greatly revived his work in Dewsbury circuit, &c. and by degrees into other circuits also, until it reached Greetland. I was present at a Lovefeast at Greetland a little before the conference in the above year, which was a glorious and a blessed season to many, and the beginning of a revival in the places round about. We had several pious and zealous friends from Bradford circuit and other places, who favored us with an account of the Lord's dealings with their souls and in their neighbourhoods. This, through the Lord's good influence, had an excellent effect on the minds of many of the people, so that they were evidently stirred up to seek God. We had been near three hours together before I was aware how the time went on ; however I was determined not to let such a favorable season pass unimproved, so I gave liberty for a few to pour out their souls in prayer to the God of heaven for a general blessing. They did so, and found uncommon access. It pleased the Lord to encourage and strengthen me to seek him and plead with him in a manner I never did before. And he hearkened, and heard, and poured out of his Spirit in a most astonishing manner. I was completely lost and swallowed up in him. What could I do? I gave myself away to him to eternify. And may I never recal what was so justly, freely, and acceptably surrendered! The effect on the people appeared to be almost universal : numbers were filled with the joy of the Holy Ghost, and several deeply awakened to a sense of their past carelessness and neglect, and present danger. Some found

peace with God while I staid, and more afterwards. After this the people had prayer meetings or class meetings every night in the week, when more or less were convinced, or converted, or both, for several months together. There were present at the Lovefeast persons from divers parts of the circuit. These being much quickened in their own souls, were made instruments of a revival in the several places to which they belong. Also the people of Greetland were invited, or went of their own accord, to places many miles distant, and were made useful to some, wherever they went. This late great work has been chiefly carried on in prayer meetings and class meetings. Indeed the latter have been often so numerously attended, as to force the Leaders to turn them into prayer meetings altogether. At these meetings there have been at times some irregularities: some crying out for distress and fear, while others have been shouting for joy and gladness of heart. Perhaps numbers in distress at the same time, and one or more endeavouring to encourage and help each of them severally. The noise of these unusual proceedings spread far and wide, so that many of the baser sort from all quarters ran together to see and hear for themselves; and I suppose it seldom happened that many went away without having their minds deeply affected with spiritual and eternal things. Some of these came with a set purpose to mock, disturb, and oppose, and they have often entered the chapel in this practice; but before they have proceeded far the hand of the Lord has been heavy upon them, and they have roared out for the disquietude of their souls. The Lord has often sent these captives deliverance on the same evening, after having wrestled with him in great agony of mind and body for some hours. The mercy of God in this has been truly wonderful, for numbers who had heard of the conversion of their companions, and came with a full determination not to cry out for mercy as they had done, but to mimic the cries of others, were in spite of all their efforts brought down on their knees, and forced to cry out in good earnest. These have generally been delivered from their bonds on the same evening, or rather on the morning after; for such has been the anguish of some, and the zeal of others, that the meetings have often conti-

nued all night long. During this revival, numbers of God's children have proved that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin, and their conversation has made it evident that they were indeed the subjects of this great grace. It is not possible to ascertain the number that have been brought to God since the work began, there having been many belonging to other circuits; but the number added to the societies is upwards of six hundred, a great majority of whom had received the knowledge of the forgiveness of sins. There have been six, ten, or twelve, and sometimes more, justified in one night. Many new classes have been raised; many societies doubled, and others much increased. The revival is throughout the circuit, one place only excepted. The work still continues, though not so rapidly as in the beginning; and the young converts have stood their ground much better than we expected. Some of our leaders, who are sensible, pious, and vigilant, have been of great use in this respect. There has been and is a similar or a greater work in other circuits round about, as Huddersfield, Bradford, Keighley, Birstal, Dewsbury, and Leeds. In Leeds circuit alone, the preachers admitted on trial upwards of one thousand persons; last quarterly visitation! Surely these are times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord! and are they not the signs of those times spoken of in scripture, when the knowledge of God shall cover the earth as the waters cover the face of the great deep? May the Lord hasten his work, that we may see it and glorify his name! Amen.

Halifax, May 6th, 1794.

ROBERT LOMAS.

Such is the statement with respect to this gracious outpouring of the Holy Ghost; and the writer envies neither the head nor the heart of that man who does not ardently pray that a similar revival may be again experienced. After the lapse of forty three years, its blessed effects are yet experienced by the church. In addition to the in-gathering of so vast a number of those

who became useful members of society, there sprung up at that period a body of local preachers whose zeal, piety, and talents were of no contemptible order.

This revival of religion as we have seen was attended with unusual commotions in the prayer meetings. To the ungodly part of the congregation, then as now, the sincere outcries of poor perishing sinners gave considerable offence. Prejudice hardened the mind, while "madmen," "enthusiasts," and many such epithets were liberally bestowed upon such "offenders to common decency." Men are much mistaken upon this point; we are not to conclude that because we perceive certain effects produced upon the bodily system by intense feelings of the mind, that that mind is not under the influence of the Spirit: neither on the other hand can we safely determine from such manifestations alone that the Holy Ghost is moving upon the soul. Therefore it is unwise, and but discovers want of reflection, to declaim against those persons, who, from a clear apprehension of their vileness and depravity,—their absolute wretchedness and misery, stifle not their voice but cry aloud for mercy and deliverance.

There is a close,—an intimate,—a mysterious connexion between mind and matter, between the body and the soul: and when the soul, covered over as it is by sin and iniquity, becomes acquainted with the depth of pollution and of darkness with which it has been enveloped, no wonder that the mind is oppressed with anguish, and overwhelmed with terror; no wonder that, when the truth is brought home respecting an offended

God, and the sharp arrows of conviction rankle in the heart, the awakened sinner is found, even in the sanctuary and amid the "great congregation," crying aloud for mercy. At the day of Pentecost, those who heard Peter and were pricked to the heart, though "Jews and devout men out of every nation of heaven were there," cared not, but in the disquietude of their souls stopped Peter in his sermon, crying aloud "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" The Phillippian gaoler, when his sins were set in dread array before his agonized conscience, and the wrath of God abode upon him, heeded not the earthquake, nor the liberated captives, but falling at the feet of them he had thrust into the inner prison besought them, saying "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?"

It is not a sound argument then, that there is no real work of the Spirit, because of the strange, and to some offensive modes in which the love of God is revealed, or rather the effects produced on the minds of awakened sinners, extending also to the peculiar expressions of feeling and experience frequently discovered in the conduct of a sinner saved by grace. A sinner, too, may be so suddenly convicted, that his bodily strength fails him; struck by the arresting arm of God in the midst of his career, like Saul of Tarsus he falls to the ground, oppressed by the revelation of the magnitude of his sins: blinded by the majesty of the Deity whose laws he has transgressed, he needs not with the persecuting messenger of the Jewish high-priest enquire "Who art thou, Lord?" but in the bitterness of his

agony exclaims with the vehemency of Peter when sinking in the troubled waves, "Lord, save me!" And, in addition, there are to the believer in Christ seasons of divine manifestation, "visitations from on high," earnestness of the inheritance, and antepasts of the bliss prepared in heaven for those who "have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb"—revelations which over power the feeble frame of flesh.

But many object to these extraordinary workings of the spirit, because of the "confusion" attendant upon them. It may be that there is too much noise and *apparent* confusion in a prayer-meeting, where twenty or thirty souls, filled with the love of God, can use no other expression than "glory," while some poor sinner mingles among their thankful shouts, his supplicatory "God be merciful to me, a sinner;" and who can wonder when *he* emerges from darkness to light—when *his* captive spirit is brought out of "the horrible pit"—when the dismal phantoms of accusing sins flit across his mind, and the horrid forms of deeds new risen from the awful past distract his memory, no longer—and when the burden of sin has rolled from off his shoulders to the foot of the cross,—that, forgetting all order and regularity, he should lustily sing, "My God is reconciled." If this be "disorder," "confusion," or "irregularity," would that Methodism was favored with more of it!

But is it "confusion."? Let it be considered what is the proper notion of confusion, but the breaking that order of things, whereby they are duly directed to their

end, so that the order and due connection of means being broken, they fail of their end. Apply this to the circumstances of which we are now writing. What is the end of religious means? At what object does the Methodist ministry aim? For what purpose are class and prayer meetings established? The salvation of souls. This is, or ought to be, the one great object of all exertion. Now if it please Him whom we serve to fix the arrow of conviction deep in the heart of a sinner, so that he roars with pain, even though a public mean of grace be interrupted, does such conduct merit the epithet "confusion," the less so when such a circumstance transpires in a private meeting for prayer? Confusion forsooth! when suddenly the very end is accomplished which the christian minister is aiming to attain! When a man in search of riches, half way on his journey, finds the pearl of great price! When by the breach of the order of the means (granted!) yet the very blessing is obtained to which those means are directed! There are characters however, who affect a great deal, and are disposed to look reproachfully upon those revivals of religion with which Methodism is occasionally blessed. It was so during the revival in 1793. The preaching house at Halifax was generally resorted to by the penitent and awakened sinner, here they cried aloud for mercy, and not unfrequently under the powerful ministry of Mr. Lomas, souls were brought out of bondage and set free; what else could be expected but that they should praise the Lord? This gaye great umbrage to the cold, heartless formalist,

and especially to those who imagined themselves the more enlightened part of the congregation. This being considered, it is not to be wondered that the contempt of such "confusion" should extend even to the world. And it becomes my painful duty to record the malignant enmity which characterized the conduct of those who made a laugh at religion and ridiculed a God.

Among the many modes of attack which Satan employed for the purpose of thwarting this glorious visitation was the stage. A number of itinerating players had been, and still are, in the habit of visiting Halifax. At the time to which I allude this fraternity appears not to have received that liberal encouragement they had anticipated, and to bring themselves into greater notoriety determined an attack upon the Methodists; or, from impious motives, hit upon a scheme for vaunting their horrid blasphemy, before an audience whom they suspected were filthy and hardened in guilt as themselves. Be this as it may, on Monday, Nov. 4th, 1793, there appeared on the usual play-bill, the following announcement:—

To which will be added a favorite interlude, (never performed here) called the SECRET DISCLOSED; or the Itinerant Field Orator's Fanatical Gibberish, lately delivered in this town, accompanied by all their pious ejaculations, celestial groans, and angelic swoonings, &c.&c.; to conclude with a heaven inspiring exit of young lambs, after their immaculate pastor. Orator—Mr. Grist. The flock—by a chosen set.

It is pleasing to notice that at the appearance of this advertisement, so insulting to common decency, and of

so blasphemous a nature, a loud voice of indignation was raised throughout the town, while even the wicked and profligate were shocked at such an outrage. The stage is too frequently made the vehicle of immorality and blasphemy, but the performance of such an "interlude" as was intended, was what the inhabitants would not allow. A few hours after the play-bill had appeared, a placard to the following effect was distributed through the town :

Halifax, November 4th, 1793.

WHEREAS IT IS REPORTED,

That the Stage Players in this town, are preparing an attempt to ridicule religion on the public theatre at the Shakespeare, this present evening, chiefly on account of the small phrenzy of a few ignorant and illiterate persons, who have lately discomposed the serious congregation at the Methodist meeting, near Shaw Syke. And whereas the idea of committing such blasphemy to the dishonour of God, and the disgrace of his sacred religion, has already much alarmed, and hurt many of the well-wishers of this town and neighbourhood; it is hoped, and earnestly requested, that the sensible and principal inhabitants will discountenance such prophane practices at all times, not only by refraining themselves, but also by restraining their servants and all those over whom they have any authority; to convince the world that this town is not so entirely devoted to that vice and wickedness, which are but too often found upon the stage in general. What judgements may this country expect to receive from the great and almighty supporter of the universe, when such insults are offered to his holy institutions?

NO METHODIST.

The "stage players" little expected that so determined a feeling would be excited against them. In the course of the day, however, they put forth the following :

To the Ladies and Gentlemen of Halifax,

MR. GRIST feels himself particularly called upon at this moment, to defend himself and his brethren against the severe attack made upon them, by the publication of a hand bill, signed "no Methodist." An attack, that not only strikes at their individual and collective interests, but at, (what is more dear to them) their moral character. Mr. Grist will, therefore, in a short address this evening, previous to the play, satisfy the most scrupulous, of the purity of his intentions, and convince those who have any doubts, that an actor reverences and obeys the dictates of his Maker, as conscientiously as any other description of men.

Monday Morning, November 4, 1793.

All this produced no effect whatever upon the public mind. The "moral character" of the "stage players" was too well known; and it would have required more rhetoric than Mr. Grist could muster, to convince even his own audience, "that an actor reverences and obeys the dictates of his Maker." Neither the address nor the interlude was allowed to proceed, and thus this blasphemer and "his brethren" were prevented making a mock at religion.

The noisy prayer-meetings which were attendant on the gracious work had attracted the notice of the townspeople, and though they deemed it but "the small phrenzy of a few ignorant and illiterate persons," they would not suffer the motley crew who earned their pittance by nightly exhibitions at the Theatre, further to vent their depravity by mocking the results of the outpouring of the Holy Ghost.

After the gracious revival, of which we have endeavoured to afford a full account, had somewhat subsided, discontent unhappily again manifested itself concerning

the sacrament. A resolution had been adopted by the conference in 1763, "that the sacrament of the Lord's supper shall not be administered by the preachers in any part of our connection, except where the whole society is unanimous for it, and will not be contented without it, and even in those few exempt societies, it shall be administered, as far as practicable, in the evening only, and according to the form of the church of England. For we could not bear that the sacrament which was instituted by our Lord as the bond of peace and union, should become a bone of contention; and are determined never to sanction the administration of that holy ordinance for the purpose of strife and division." The consequence of this determination was, that while some societies quietly acquiesced in an unanimous desire to receive the sacrament at the hands of their own ministers, others made it a bone of contention, and were marked by wranglings and disputings; among the foremost of this class Halifax must be ranked. It is deeply to be deplored that any dissatisfaction should have been manifested by the society, at so peculiar a period.

In 1794 Mr. Lomas, to the deep regret of the people, was removed from the circuit having travelled two years. His successor was Mr. George Gibbons. The number in society was stated to be 1500, and Halifax this year ranked as the fourth society both in numbers and importance of any other circuit in the kingdom, London excepted.

Deep murmurs of dissatisfaction were now heard in

the society at shorter intervals, the people expressing, in strong terms, their determination to maintain their union with the establishment inviolate. Though there were a few, and among these ranked the majority of the officials, whose wish was to the contrary. Hostilities at length openly broke out, and the fearful prospect of a schism presented itself. The discontented members eventually petitioned the conference assembled at Manchester, as follows :—

Halifax, July 25th, 1795.

Dear Brethren,

We the undersigned, being leaders and members of the Methodist society at Halifax, being fully sensible that any deviation from the old plan by introducing the sacrament among us, will have a tendency to hurt, if not destroy the cause of God. We therefore cannot in our consciences agree to it, and hereby wish to inform you, we are determined to decide by, and support the old plan only.

After the above declaration we do appeal with reverence to the searcher of hearts, and likewise to the Methodist connection in general; that we are clear of the consequences of a division, as the blame must fully rest on those who dissent and not on us, who are determined to abide Methodists.

We would refer to your serious consideration the decision of the lot at the London conference, in the year of our Lord 1792, which division we believe the Lord intended to abide to the latest posterity, as he counts not years like us, being the unchangeable Jehovah.

Then follow the names of 5 leaders and 120 members.

It is but proper to observe that the principal “agitator” was Mr. Samuel Waterhouse, of Washer Lane, an influential and wealthy member of society, but rigidly attached to the church : through his influence a great

part of the signatures to the above were obtained. I cannot avoid noticing the ignorant and bigoted passage of the petition which states the petitioners to be "fully sensible" that the introduction "of the sacrament among us will have a tendency to hurt, if not to destroy, the cause of God."

The reader is probably aware that during the sitting of this conference, the Plan of Pacification was passed. The part of that plan relating to the sacrament question says—"the sacrament of the Lord's supper shall not be administered in any chapel, except the majority of the trustees of that chapel on the one hand, and the majority of the stewards and leaders belonging to that chapel (as best qualified to give the sense of the people) on the other, allow of it." It was also added, according to Mr. Myles's Chronology of Methodism, "that these majorities must testify in writing to the Conference that they are persuaded no separation will be made thereby." Whether or not this clause was attended to in Halifax, the sequel will shew. The trustees and preachers triumphed, the Lord's supper was administered, and in accordance with the spirit manifested in the preceding petition, a rent was made in the society. The individuals whose names were attached to the petition seceded, and assembled for worship at the residence of Mr. Waterhouse, Washer Lane, where a lovefeast was held on the first sabbath of their departure, and was characterized by such a feeling and gracious effusion of the Holy Spirit, as the people had scarce ever experienced before.

No regular plans of future procedure having been arranged, and the people finding themselves as sheep without a shepherd, began to lament their departure from the fold, and by a gracious interference of Providence they beheld their error; the manifestation of the Holy Spirit above mentioned, was as

The kind upbraiding glance,
Which broke unfaithful Peter's heart,

and the division which at the outset threatened fatal consequences to the stability of the society, ended in the return of nearly all the seceders into the pale of the body from which they had separated. Mr. Waterhouse, however, who had been at the root of the whole business, never again united himself with the Methodist society, though he was an occasional hearer. It is to be lamented that a few of those who at this time left the fold, "forgot their first love," and wandered through life's howling wilderness, the fearful monuments of strife and division among the people of God.

At the conference to which we have alluded, the Halifax preachers were Mr. John Pritchard and Mr. George Gibbons. During their labors there was an increase of 100 members to the society.

During the year 1796 it appears that the number of members in Sowerby Bridge was but about twenty. Among these, and the third upon the class paper, (Mr. and Mrs. Walker being the two first,) was William Walker, a laborer employed by Mr. John Walker, and an acceptable local preacher. The death of this faithful servant and exemplary christian took place under

melancholy and distressing circumstances. When old and infirm, he missed his way one dark night, and fell into the canal, and though not actually drowned, (for he was found floating upon the water in a state of unconsciousness,) survived the accident but a short time.* The late John Sutcliffe, Esq. of Willow Hall, (who died Oct. 9th, 1833,) had about this time united himself with the Methodist body,—his name stands nearly at the bottom of the class paper.

There is a singular circumstance connected with William Walker, which though it may by some be ridiculed as incredulous, the writer pledges his veracity to be a fact. It was the unhappy lot of old William to be deprived of his sight by a cow, which gored him so dreadfully that one of his eyes was torn out, and he speedily lost the use of the other, thus becoming totally dark. This was a bitter cross to poor William, and was as much deplored by his friends. I cannot exactly say how many years he remained blind; but one day as he sat musing upon divine things, the door of his house opened and he was accosted by a strange voice. The individual who had made bold to enter, finding William alone, to his utter surprise began to lament the accident which had befallen him. William conceived from the manner of conversation that the man was a “quack-

* The Rev. W. M'Kitrick preached his funeral sermon at several places in the circuit, on which occasions so many sinners were awakened and converted as to call forth the remark—that he was like Sampson, for while many sinners were *slain* through his instrumentality in his life time, the dead which were slain by his death, “were more than they which he slew in his life.”

doctor," and felt disinclined to continue the conversation. Upon an intimation from the stranger that he could perform a cure, William recoiled at the thought, till in the simplicity of his soul (as he subsequently related it) he thought—"why, the Methodist preachers used to be called 'quacks,' and if a quack preacher can do my soul good, a quack doctor may do my body good." With this he consented to place himself into the hands of this stranger. "Before we proceed any further," said he, "let us kneel down to prayer." And such a blessed season William had never before experienced. The man then gave him medicine for his eye, with instructions how to apply it, and then left him. The medicine was used, according to the instructions, and the third morning on waking, he could perceive the windows of his bed-room; in a few days more he saw "men as trees walking," and very shortly regained the entire use of his eye. But the strange individual who was the instrument of this cure could never be found, none of William's neighbours remembered seeing such an one, and whence he came and whither he went remains to this day involved in mystery.

In 1796 we find an entire change in the appointment of preachers for Halifax. Mr. William Thom, and Mr. Joseph Sutcliffe succeeding Messrs. Pritchard and Gibbon. Though the whole connexion vibrated with the sentiments espoused by Mr. Kilham and his partizans, the society was augmented by 100 members.

It is again my painful duty to record unhappy contentions in the Halifax society. There seems to have

existed a spirit of discontent, even after the settlement of the sacrament question, attention being drawn to the great questions then agitated throughout the Wesleyan body in general. While the Plan of Pacification had satisfied the more moderate portion of the society, there still remained contentious individuals who loudly declaimed against the measure, and became exasperated and infuriated against the preachers. The minister whom we have just noticed became the champion of this party, and occasioned considerable uneasiness, especially by his publication of several pamphlets and among others, a work called the "Progress of Liberty." There can be no wonder that the society should be in a state of excitement, when the character of their ministers was traduced in so unbecoming a manner as the following instance:—"do not many of the preachers want to bind you in chains of their own making," and again "no government under heaven, except *absolute monarchies*, or the *papal hierarchy*, are so despotic and oppressive as ours is. Can it be supposed (he asks) that a system of this nature would never be abused to the reproach of our connexion? Does it not open a way for designing men to act tyrannically and dishonestly? Is it not calculated to create jealousies and distrust in our leading men?" Nay, the preachers were even charged with immorality in that they had imposed upon the people in bringing out improper persons as preachers from selfish motives,—that they had only "mock examinations of their character," and deeming them even as a "solemn farce,"—that they had wasted the public

money, "for while we whine and cant, like begging friars, to excite compassion in our friends, under a pretence of supporting worn out preachers and their widows, and prostitute their charity to support rich old men, and the young widows of old men, what Jesuit ever acted a baser part than we act?" The spread of such opinions as these, and their espousal by many who ought to have been as pillars in the church, were ill calculated to promote peace, harmony, and good will. And these sentiments being imbibed by a considerable number of the members of society in Halifax, we cannot be surprised at the outbreakings of dissatisfaction which threw the whole circuit into confusion.

The discontent was not at all softened down by Mr. Kilham preaching in the Methodist chapel, at Halifax, soon after his expulsion, and also at Greetland chapel. At the close of his sermon he indulged in observations relative to his own case, and it is needless to observe that a considerable impression was made upon the minds of the people. None of the dissensions which had been experienced since the death of Mr. Wesley presented such gloomy prospects to the cause of Methodism, for not merely did the mere members of society take up the cause, but also many of the influential leaders, local preachers, &c. This fact may serve to account for Mr. Kilham's preaching as above.

Affairs at length arrived to such a pitch that at the quarter day, in Jan. 1797, a motion was made to call a meeting of trustees, local preachers, stewards, and leaders to consider the propriety of preparing an address

on the agitated state of the connexion, which might be sent to the preachers and the society at large. Previous to the day appointed for the meeting, a committee met, when the sketch of an address was drawn up, which was subsequently approved of, and ordered to be printed, that the copies might be sent according to original intention. Between this preparatory meeting and the proposed official assembly, there was effected in the minds of many, a great change, and some who had approved and promoted the publication of the address, and had actually signed it, now entirely disapproved of sending to the societies. This revolution of sentiment was materially strengthened by the presence of Mr. Joseph Benson among the people, he having been induced to come over from Leeds, to afford his advice at this critical juncture of affairs. Being introduced to a meeting of the committee, who were assembled for the purpose of preparing the before mentioned address for the press, he spoke very decisively against its publication. There began now to be less solicitation about publishing the address, and it was eventually agreed that the final decision of the matter should be left to the ensuing quarter day, and a majority of that meeting decided against the original motion.

Notwithstanding this decision, the address was eventually published in the "Methodist Monitor," and it may be of interest to glance at one or two particulars of that address. Being addressed "to the local preachers, trustees, stewards, leaders, and members of the Methodist connexion," it sets out with expressing a

deep concern relative to the unhappy contentions and dissatisfaction which had prevailed for several years in the connexion. Feeling persuaded that real evils did exist in the societies, they conceived that the attempts of the preachers to bring about a better state of things had failed, and that something must be done in the way of improving the mode of government. A few of the evils they complained of were mentioned.—

“First, we judge the conference has too much power, as appears evident from their not accepting any members of the society, as helpers with them in the management of their affairs. Second, from the partial distribution of the yearly collection, and the secrecy which has been observed by them in the statement of their accounts. Third, from their making rules to govern the whole connexion, without the concurrence or knowledge of any of the persons to be governed. Fourth, from the want of accuracy and clearness in the statement of the receipts and expenditure of the yearly collection, the affairs of the book room and Kingswood School.

“Second, we apprehend the under power of superintendent preachers naturally follows that of the conference. 1st. They may appoint stewards and leaders and put them away at their leisure. 2nd. They may receive members into, and put them away from the society, without consulting any person in the society, except a single leader. 3rd. They receive the yearly collection and the Kingswood collection, while no persons in the circuit have power to examine or audit their accounts.

4th. In appointing whom they please for local preachers, and recommending what local preachers they choose to the conference to travel, without consulting any persons in the circuits from which they were taken." Then follows fifteen proposals to improve the plan of government, and especially to remove the before mentioned evils. Some of the proposals are well tempered, the principle of lay delegation however is mooted in some of them.

I have thus inserted some little information relative to the address which caused so much uneasiness as to whether it should be published, and the reader will have some ground for judging the views entertained by the society, especially so as numbers in the circuit had signed that address. The writer would by no means indulge in any unkind reflections upon the characters of many who now "through faith and patience inherit the promises," yet whose conduct about this time was marked by tergiversation. Whatever views such characters subsequently entertained, at one time the majority of the influential members were inclined to what, in the sentiments of the day, was deemed the side of liberty; and Mr. Kilham's pamphlets were read with avidity. In Halifax, however, the excitement began to subside. Passion gave place to reason; irritation and excitement to calm and deliberate reflection.

The effect of this re-action was, that on Mr. Kilham being expelled the connexion in 1796, the stability of the society in the town was not affected in any considerable extent. Not more than six or seven individu-

als seceded from the old connexion, as it now began to be termed. Of these, Jonathan Brownhill and Joshua Dickinson, both local preachers ; Noah Carter, Jonathan Bairstow, and John Rhoebottom (at that time a young man, and who had been of essential service in the choral part of worship) were the chief. They took a small room, in Northgate, immediately behind the Buck Inn, and formed themselves into a regular society. During the course of the year an eminent individual in the circuit espoused their cause, and took the side of Mr. Kilham—I refer to the superintendant preacher, Mr. Thom. The secession of this gentleman created general surprise among the Methodists, who had always imagined him a firm adherent to original and genuine Methodism. The seceded party engaged two rooms for his accommodation, and he seems to have been their first pastor.

Having condensed as much as possible the information relative to the town in this chapter, there is reserved for our next the detail of the feeling which pervaded the country parts of the circuit at this time. We must not forget to notice that at the conference in 1797, held in Leeds, Mr. Thomas Taylor and Mr. Robert Miller were appointed to the circuit. It is gratifying also to record, that from 1795 to 1797, a period of so much disturbance and uneasiness, Methodism flourished and increased its numbers in the Halifax circuit more than 200 members.

CHAPTER XI.

The Kilham party at Illingworth—disgraceful proceedings—expulsion of Mr. Taylor from the chapel. A laith is lent the society to preach in. Singular fact concerning James Smith. New chapel at Illingworth. Messrs. Bogie and Mc. Donald,—extent of the Halifax circuit in 1802. Conduct of the Kilham party at Brighouse,—John Sharp, uncharity towards—the chapel is unlawfully wrested from the proper owners—chancery suit—decree of the master of the rolls. Conduct of Mr. Thom.

NO part of the circuit suffered so much during the agitation of Mr. Kilham's cause, as Illingworth. Here the society was placed in great jeopardy, and the persecution endured by those attached to the old connexion was of no mean character. The nature of the subject and the characteristics peculiar to the division, render it necessary to enter somewhat into detail.

The erection of the chapel at Bradshaw (for this was more properly the name of the place, and by which the society was then designated) has before been referred to; the congregation, prior to Mr. Kilham's expulsion, amounted to a respectable number, and the affairs of the society were in general conducted in a proper and efficient manner. The society consisted of five classes, the one at Mixenden Stones and in the chapel was led by Timothy Akroyd, that at Bradshaw Row, by James

Riley, the one at Holdsworth by James Smith, and that which met at Cock-hill by Jonas Varley. Amid these hills however, a reading club, together with a debating society unfortunately was formed, to which the detestable works of Paine were admitted. Strange as it may seem, this club was not only joined by many of the members of the Wesleyan congregation but of the society also, and doubtless proved the principal cause of the future disturbances. An innovation upon the discipline of Methodism also became a source of uneasiness;—a number of disaffected members adopted the plan of introducing Kilham's pamphlets at the class meetings, no sooner would these means of grace conclude than publications of the kind in question were introduced, and another hour was spent in angry discussion. The only leader who determinedly opposed such a procedure was James Smith, (Riley had died a little before, or he would undoubtedly have sustained this honorable distinction also,—Luke Shaw succeeded him as a leader.)

Thus prepared by having imbibed the principles advocated in the works alluded to, a fearful disturbance broke out on the expulsion of Mr. Kilham, and which was sustained alike by the members of the congregation and of the society.* Strife and dissension were the or-

* I cannot but again allude to the formation of the club before mentioned, and to which works of so detestable a character were admitted. Subsequent to writing the paragraphs just perused by the reader, I again visited the neighbourhood to pursue my enquiries relative to the division, but more especially with regard to investigating the foundation of the seceding society; and from those and other enquiries and considerations do unhesitatingly affirm.—Tom Paine's works, and especially that production—

der of the day, and in the most uproarious and tumultuous manner did those who wished to alienate the chapel (for this measure was absolutely determined on) conduct themselves.

It is much to be regretted that upon building the chapel, no regular trust-deed was formed. The chapel was erected on a piece of waste ground belonging to the lord of the manor, by the voluntary contributions of this and the adjacent circuits, and the society at Bradshaw anticipating no disturbance of this nature, did not observe those necessary precautions which most certainly were incumbent upon them. The agitators were well aware of the situation in which the chapel was placed, and the chapel-keeper, Jas. Butterfield, being a strong

“the rights of man” as the principal foundation. I purposely withhold all names, but the most conspicuous members among those who were guilty of the conduct about to be related, were without doubt or possibility of contradiction, admirers of that detestable knot of scorpions, whose works have infused so much poison through the land. This fact too, I cannot withhold, that the boast was made by a certain person connected with that division, to a conspicuous member of the Methodist Society at Illingworth, “mention me a sentiment or paragraph in ‘Paine’s rights of man’ and I’ll tell you the very page where it is to be found in that book.” And let it be remembered this is not a solitary instance wherein such a declaration could be made: the writer has had a similar statement made to him. Truth renders the publicity of these details necessary, not that the writer is wishful to cast any undue reflection upon that party who seceded from the Bradshaw Society. I should not, if I judge aright, be entitled to claim any merit for the present production, as a history of Wesleyan Methodism in this neighbourhood, were that history found wanting in information respecting facts however gloomy in their character, or foul and black in their development. Caution has guided the pen while candour and charity dictated this record of events; and prior to their commitment to the press, they were not merely read over, but also approved of, as being correct, by individuals connected with both parties in that neighbourhood.

partizan on that side of the question, they determined to oust the regular preachers, and have the affairs entirely in their own hands. The more securely to effect their purpose, application was made to the steward of —. Savile, Esq. the lord of the manor, to purchase the ground on which the chapel was erected. This was accordingly, after much false representation, effected at a small cost; and thus the manœuverings (which were controlled by an individual, unconnected with the society and whose character I will not delineate,) of the new party proved successful.

The day, of all others, fixed upon for the installation of the new party was on the Sabbath day when Mr. Taylor was appointed to preach to them,—the very man who had opened the chapel and travelled scores of miles for the purpose of raising subscriptions to relieve the debt upon the same; this was the individual whom they fixed upon thus publicly to insult and despise. On the arrival of the day in question, Mr. Taylor proceeded to Bradshaw; his jealousy was first aroused by the chapel keeper, who usually took charge of his horse, refusing to touch the animal or allow it the usual accommodation. Upon proceeding to the chapel, one of the principal ringleaders having charge of the door, rudely endeavoured to thrust Mr. Taylor back, but failed in the attempt: it was with difficulty Mr. T. gained admittance into the chapel, and then he found the pulpit already occupied, (though the service had not commenced,) and the stairs crowded with a number of stout men, who pushed and thrust him from them. The

whole congregation was speedily in an uproar, many of the people discovering the most unbecoming and unchristian conduct while they shouted "turn him out." Mr. Taylor looking up into the pulpit found it occupied by a man to whom he had given his admission ticket into the society,—a man whom he had fostered and nourished, and watched over in the Lord. And what must have been the feelings of the aged and venerable pastor when he was forced from the very chapel he had been the principal cause of placing in comfortable and easy circumstances, and then hissed and hooted at as he silently, and with tears in his eyes, paced his way down the lane.

A few of the congregation, after witnessing these disgusting proceedings in the chapel, followed Mr. Taylor to a laith which Wm. Woodhead lent them for the occasion. Here a temporary pulpit was erected, and service immediately commenced, and it is a remarkable circumstance that upon opening the Bible, Mr. Taylor's attention was providentially fixed on that encouraging passage,—“The Lord will provide.” From this suitable and heaven-appointed text he preached, and in the course of his sermon, forgetting the treatment he had recently received, his mind referred to former times—“bless the Lord” said he, “I remember the time when at Bradshaw we had no place to preach in, the heavens alone were our canopy, but now a good barn is afforded us and in which we can assemble.” It was a peculiar trait of Mr. Taylor's character to look at the

bright side of the cloud, and on this occasion he cheered the minds of the people by its contemplation.

Such then was the manner in which the Methodists were ejected from their chapel, and such were the principal characters who were mixed up with the disgraceful affair. The fact is singular, that the man of whom we have spoken as occupying the pulpit on the occasion just narrated, was shortly after necessitated to quit his country with great precipitancy, having rendered himself amenable to its laws in a case for which transportation would have been his doom: and another individual whose station was at the chapel door, and who had endeavored to thrust Mr. Taylor thence, was, some years after, suddenly called into eternity, and there is every reason to fear in an unprepared state.

A few of the members afterwards endeavoured to obtain the chapel, but the chapel-keeper claimed possession. Strong guards were placed every Sunday at the chapel doors, to prevent the Methodists entering, and thus the usurpers not only obtained but retained the place of worship: and more than this, they considered they had a right to what the chapel contained, and the poor, persecuted Methodists were unable to regain either their hymn-books or cushions.

Finding every endeavour fruitless, they next made an appeal to the stewards, Timothy Akroyd and James Jewitt, who also had gone over to the stronger side, for the return of the money they had subscribed for the chapel, and the losses they had sustained. The justice of this claim could not but be admitted, and a promise

was therefore made that the demand should be attended to ; but this promise was only partially fulfilled.

A complete wreck was thus made of the society. All the leaders with the stewards and principal members, except James Smith and David Clayton, and thirteen private members of society, left the connexion ; and it was the general opinion that could the seceders have gained James Smith, the connexion would not only have lost the chapel, but every vestige of a society. He, however, remained firm.

He like the seraph Abdiel, faithful found
Among the faithless, faithful only he :
Among the innumerable false, unmov'd,
Unshaken, unseduced, unterrified ;
His loyalty he kept, his love, his zeal,
Nor number, nor example, with him wrought,
To swerve from truth, or change his constant mind,
Tho' single.

From the outset he had discountenanced and disclaimed the introduction, into the class meetings, of pamphlets of a nature opposed to peace and harmony ; and especially against the spread of infidel principles and infidelity itself. This became a source of much annoyance ; but when he presented a bold and undaunted front to the unchristian conduct which now characterised the people, he became an object of almost inconceivable *persecution*. The reader will confess that this is not too hard a term, when it is told him, that such was the weight of affliction endured by James Smith, such the slanderous assertions and conduct of the people

with whom he had once been united, that with the accumulated anxiety, the hair of his head actually came off! The circumstance is undeniably corroborated; he did not remain the whole of his life time, bald; his hair grew again but of a different colour, being white as wool. Some further remarks relating to James Smith have previously appeared in part of the work. The remnant of the society continued to meet in the barn or laith belonging to William Woodhead, and for the present we leave them.

We have previously mentioned that Mr. Kilham preached at Greetland about the same time he preached at Halifax. During his visit to the neighbourhood he remained a night at Exley, and several of the society at that place became shaken in their opinions. The chief strong hold of the party in this quarter seems to have been at Elland, where they took a chapel, and drew together a tolerable congregation. This continued for some time, till a strong wind blew down the chimney, which fell upon the roof and destroyed it in part; being unable to repair the damage, they were obliged to preach in dwellinghouses, these services merged into prayer meetings and then the cause dwindled away altogether.

During this year the society, from the causes just mentioned, suffered a declension in its number of members; in 1798 we find them ranging at 1250. For some reason, which I am unable to assign, a young man was called to labour in the circuit, Joseph Collier.

We must not forget to pass by the admission of a

member into society, who in after life became a burning and a shining light—Mr. Edmund Ashworth. Mr. Miller had long observed his spirit and conversation and at length solicited him to join the Methodist society. To this solicitation he yielded, and began to seek the Lord with increased diligence; shortly after “the Lord whom he sought” enabled him to believe on Jesus, with his heart unto righteousness, and sealed his pardon on his heart. He continued to the day of his death, (April 2nd, 1823) an upright and honorable member of society, walking daily “in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost.”

Nothing of particular interest transpired the succeeding year, save that the society of Bradshaw augmented in its numbers, now began to agitate the question of the propriety of erecting a second chapel. Wm. Woodhead, of whose name we would always make honorable mention, purchased a piece of ground and offered it to the society. Mr. Thos. Taylor interested himself much in the business, and at the conference held at Manchester in 1799, we find the following—“Question. Shall any collections be made this year for chapels, out of the circuits where they are situated? Answer. For a chapel at Bradshaw, a collection may be made in the Halifax, Keighley, Bradford, Wakefield, Colne, Todmorden, and Birstal circuits.” A collection was accordingly made, and the same year the chapel was opened. It may be well to mention that this chapel was built during a peculiarly distressing time, (called *barley time* to this day in that part of the country). Notwithstand-

ing this period of scarcity a chapel was erected, and I know of no place where the cause is so heartily espoused, where the people are so lovingly united, where the congregations are so numerous, where Methodism is so duly appreciated as at Illingworth. I must not forget to mention that the chapel was opened by Mr. Highfield, and that the concourse was so great in the afternoon as to oblige him to preach in the open air.

Illingworth Chapel will contain a congregation of about 400 persons, and is well situated for the convenience of the neighbourhood; a grave yard is attached, and at a small distance is a school room (built in 1819,) capable of containing nearly 200 children. About two day's work of land also belongs to the chapel.

A change took place in the appointment of preachers, in 1799 Mr. George Highfield and Mr. J. Booth, being stationed for Halifax. Under the labors of the late preachers much good had been effected, and the number of members increased to 1310. It was in this year that Todmorden became the head of a circuit, whereby Sow-erby and Luddenden were taken from Halifax, though they yet remained on the plan and were occasionally, about once a quarter, favored with the Halifax preachers. I have not used the word "favored" incautiously, the Halifax local preachers had first ploughed the ground in those places, it was their ministry under which the people had for so long a time sat, and they accounted it a privilege now and then to hear an old voice.

For the three succeeding years, barren is the field of information, and I can do nothing more than merely

point out the preachers who were stationed in the circuit and the numbers of society. In 1800, Mr. Booth was succeeded by Mr. J. Drake, and although the circuit had suffered the loss of two important places, there had been an increase of forty members. In 1801, the preachers were Mr. James Bogie and Mr. James M' Donald, and during the year there was a public collection made in Halifax, for the Bradford and Clitheroe chapels. The society this year decreased some little. The same preachers continued in the circuit during 1802, and the number of members does not appear to have been materially on the increase. In 1803, Mr. John Gaulter and Mr. John Crosby were appointed to the circuit, a slight increase had also taken place in the number of members in society. A collection was made for a chapel at Ripponden, through the Halifax, Keighley, and Skipton circuits, and which was erected during the year.

It may be of interest to the reader to know the extent of the circuit about this time; having before me a plan for 1802, I am able to give him some information on this point. Commencing with Halifax, the circuit embraced Greetland, Bradshaw, Whichfield, Hove Edge, (or Brighouse) Elland, Rastrick, Jagger Green, Skircoat Green, Mearclough, Wheatley, Ripponden, Woodhead, Hanging Lee, Ovenden Wood, Sowerby, Lindley, Fellgreave, in all eighteen places. On an average there were twenty-one sermons preached every Sunday, and for this work only seventeen preachers; none but

those of hardy constitutions could bear up under such excessive labor.

We have already alluded to several places in the circuit as having suffered considerably about this time, but there was another place in the neighbourhood where the society was much distracted from the advocacy of the new, and what was then termed liberal plans; before we enter upon the following particulars, it may be necessary to refer to several circumstances of prior occurrence. I am sensible that in doing this there is a departure from the chronological arrangement of the work, but it will tend to discover the whole facts in a more compact and connected form.

A society having existed at Brighthouse for some time, and its prospects being of a cheering and promising nature, the question as to the propriety and expediency of erecting a chapel was agitated. In the year 1791 or 1792, William Stockwell purchased a piece of ground of Mr. Thomas Gill, situated in an obscure part of a field called the Park, at Brighthouse. This ground, which cost £20, was conveyed to three Methodist preachers, Mr. Wm. Thompson, Mr. John Pawson, and Mr. Entwistle, who were then in the circuit. Wm. Stockwell lodged the conveyance deed in the hands of Mr. Pawson, to remain with him and the preachers who should succeed him, till a proper time arrived for building a chapel thereon.

On Mr. Atmore becoming the superintendant in 1793 the deed just noticed was committed to his keeping. About February the following year, the preachers and

several friends at Brighthouse were of opinion that the time to build the chapel was then come, Mr. Atmore and two friends from Halifax proceeded to view the ground. Some dissatisfaction being manifested with respect to its situation, it was proposed that application should be made to Mr. Gill, who agreed to sell the scite of the present chapel for the sum of twenty-seven pounds: the parties to surrender up the former conveyance deed of £20, thus making the whole of the purchase money £47.

The next proposition was, that a subscription book should be opened forthwith. Mr. Lomas immediately wrote a preamble to the book, and the friends commenced canvassing for subscriptions in Halifax and the neighbourhood. The preamble is dated March 20th, 1794, and runs thus—"The congregation of Methodists at Brighthouse, being through the late revival of religion in that neighbourhood, become much too large for their present place of worship, it is thought expedient to attempt the raising a larger and more commodious one. On the week nights the great number of hearers renders them quite uncomfortable: but on the Lord's day, the throng and heat are so intolerable, as to endanger the health of weak and tender persons. N. B.—A kind and able friend, has given a piece of ground for the purpose; the members of the society intend to exert their utmost ability; and it is hoped that those who are in the habit of hearing the word preached, or are friends to the public good, will likewise contribute to the support of this laudable undertaking."

We must now introduce an individual who took a prominent part in the building of the chapel. John Sharp was accounted the general treasurer, (being solicited by the friends to accept that office,) all monies were accordingly placed in his hands, and he was requested to take charge of the management of the whole concern. During the time the chapel was building, the friends at Brighthouse had several conversations with the superintendant of the circuit, respecting the proper settlement of the chapel. Mr. Atmore promised to surrender the conveyance deed then in his possession, if they would consent to a trust deed being made that should be agreeable as well to themselves as to the conference. To this proposal there was an unanimous consent.

The chapel was finished in 1795, and the year following there commenced a series of disputes among the trustees, arising in the first place from the erection of several buildings adjoining the chapel. John Sharp thus gave an account of it : "about a year after the chapel was finished, the whole of the trustees and several other friends were of opinion, that a house, stable, and office were wanted. Accordingly, all the trustees and John Holroyd, the mason, met at James Avison's, at a time appointed, for the purpose of considering the propriety of such a step.—John Holroyd told us, that it would be impossible to build up to the gable end of the chapel a building, that would turn water in all winds, except it was raised as high as the chapel, which is about twenty-two feet from the ground to the square. How-

ever, after some conversation upon the subject, it was agreed, that the house should be built that height, and that a stable and office should likewise be erected. It was further agreed, that I should find the money ; for which I was to have security given by the other trustees, as soon as the amount of the sum necessary could be ascertained."

When the building was about half finished, the consent of the whole of the trustees was obtained for covering the vacant ground near the chapel, with cottages, and when these buildings were part finished, Wm. Stockwell refused to give John Sharp security for his money, but proposed that the land should be sold to him, on condition of the payment of seven shillings per annum, for building up to the gable end of the chapel. Observing how critically he was circumstanced, he was glad to accept of any terms, and the whole of the trustees having agreed to sell him the land upon which he had built, he employed an attorney to make a deed of conveyance, to accomplish which it was necessary that the trust deed of the chapel should be perused. After considerable difficulty John Sharp obtained the deed in question, but not before he had given a promissory note of £200 for its safe return. Shortly after this the fickle and unstable part of the trustees again changed their minds, and declared they would not confirm their bargain ! Again was John Sharp likely to be placed in uncomfortable circumstances, and perceiving the manner in which he was about to be used, and especially when told by Wm. Stockwell that he should have no

security ; but if he would pay for the land and the seven shillings we have before mentioned, and return the trust deed, and deliver to the steward (Joseph Pratt) the balance in hand, then they would suffer him to receive the rents during his life, but if he behaved ill, why then they would *turn out* refractory tenants, and put in such as they pleased. When we say, John Sharp found himself thus circumstanced he refused to return the trust deed, and especially to such an individual as its last holder. And in this he was right, Stockwell and his party had refused to confirm the promises of security for his money ; when they had agreed to sell the ground, they refused to confirm the bargain ; they were for seizing the property he had built, at their instigation, and by their unanimous consent, and, I ask, who would not have kept the deed under similar circumstances ? So bare faced were their schemes that John Garside, (a local preacher) who had hitherto supported them, upon hearing their unjust and unreasonable proposals, declared—" If we cannot support our new religion without robbing John Sharp, I will have nothing further to do with it ; "and he accordingly abandoned their schemes and left them.

The Kilham party having now obtained a majority of the trustees, and having abused and blamed the regular preachers for what they called their abuse of power, they in their turn, made such a stretch of power, as to judge, condemn, and exclude the preachers, without trial, from the very chapel they held in trust for the use of those preachers to the exclusion of all

others ! A similar scene was enacted to that at Illingworth : Abram Midgley, an aged local preacher, being the individual whom they turned out. The Methodists being thus ejected from their chapel, removed their services to Hove Edge, the house of John Sharp being duly licensed for the purpose, and here the preachings were held during thirteen years.

Several attempts were made to regain the chapel, or to adjust the matter in an amicable manner. It is useless reciting the various scenes of an unpleasant nature which occurred ; but to shew that the old body were disposed for peace, I may remark that in 1804, John Sharp chose three disinterested individuals to wait upon all the trustees, (the Kilhamite trustees were then five in number and the other four.) " These three men made to those five trustees the following reasonable proposals : viz. To value the trust estate as it then stood, and divide it into nine shares, (exclusive of the monies the Kilhamites had laid out in the seats, clock, burying-ground, &c.) reckoning five shares for them and four for us. It was then proposed that we should cast lots which party should have the chapel. In case the lot should fall to us, we further offered, to indemnify, or pay them for all the extra expence they had been at in pewing the chapel, &c. upon a fair valuation, besides paying them the amount of their five shares.—However this, like all former proposals, was rejected with contempt."

Now what was more reasonable than the foregoing proposals ? Had the new party subscribed large sums

to the chapel, they even then would have had a plea for their arbitrary conduct. But in looking at their subscriptions, those five men subscribed only £19. 19s. while the others subscribed £41. 15s. And yet the chapel must be perverted to other purposes than those for which it was originally intended, and for which every fraction of the money subscribed had been given ! And after the spread of the opinions then prevalent, there was a majority of the subscribers against the chapel being prostituted to any other purpose than that for which it was originally intended. In 1808, the sense of the surviving subscribers was obtained, when after a careful and minute investigation, it was found that three fourths of the subscribers wished the chapel to be occupied by its original possessors, for the use of the Methodist preachers ; and actually gave their signatures for that purpose. But more than this,—the cost of erecting the chapel was about £460, including the purchase of the ground, while the total amount of the subscriptions of the new party, could not reach £40, and yet they usurped all power, and turn the preachers adrift,

Determined to ascertain whether the new party had a legal right to possess the chapel, John Sharp filed a bill in the high Court of Chancery, and the following was the important decision—

That, as what was now called in the pleadings, for the sake of distinction, The Old Conference, was the only Conference which existed, at the time of the execution of the trust-deed, and for many years afterward, it must be determined to be that Confer-

ence only, which was referred to in the deed. And as the Trustees had not reserved, by any clause in the deed, power of making new regulations, by any decision of a majority of themselves, they must be compelled to execute the trust, according to the laws and regulations of that conference, for the use of which they held the trust estate, and admit those preachers only, who were sent by the Old Conference.

The services were now removed from Hove Edge, to Brighthouse, and the cause began to prosper, though great evil was consequent upon the proceedings of the now exasperated party.

To no individual is the meed of praise more justly due than to John Sharp, the cause in fact owes its salvation to him, and we wonder not considering his uprightness and determined resolution, that his opponents strove to impeach his integrity, while they hurled their malignant scorn—their bitter enmity at his brow. He rose superior to their malice and hatred, and continued a faithful steward, expending a considerable competency in support of the religion he enjoyed and the people he loved, till mortality was swallowed up of life.

Before we close the present chapter, it must be observed that owing to the distracted state of the society at Illingworth, in 1793, regular preachings were established, and a class meeting formed, at Over Hazlehurst, or Hill End, Blackmires; Joseph Woodhead and Henry Fearnley, distinguishing themselves among the early members of society.

CHAPTER XII.

Jonathan Saville—his History, &c. from his birth to the present time—formation of a Sunday school—table. List of new trustees. 1805. Messrs. Sutcliffe, Yewdal, and Needham. New Chapel at Southowram—at Elland. Messrs. Suter, Bartholomew, and M' Kitrick. The Rev. J. Bunting—enlargement of South Parade chapel—defects in the chapel—their removal.

IN delineating the history of a christian community, and more especially of a Methodist society, the historian will meet with many characters, whose expansive genius, or glowing talents, cannot but attract attention. Such characters are not the exclusives of a refined circle, they are found even amid the humble walks of life; the reader has already had instances of this nature,—individuals whose early years have been spent not in academic groves, but in pursuing the arduous avocations of life, but who have providentially and in a remarkable and striking manner been introduced into certain spheres of usefulness, where they have been considered as great and shining lights. While at the same time there have been others, placed in less advantageous circumstances, who have discovered a genius and talent which only required a good and early education, with facilities for the proper culture of their naturally strong abilities, to

bring them out, so to speak, as characters whose high and attractive gifts should excite the admiration of every discriminating mind. And yet, in their comparatively uneducated state many such characters have sustained high and important offices in the church, with great and lasting credit to themselves, and to the advantage of those who have reaped the fruits of their strong and well stored minds.

To find employment, for even the meanest capacity, is a beautiful peculiarity in the constitution of Methodism. So varied, so numerous are the modes of doing good,—so multiplied the offices in the Wesleyan body, that the individual is culpable whose talents are not brought out into useful exercise. To this peculiarity in Methodism must be ascribed the rise and progress of many whose praise is in all the churches, and among others, of a character to whom we now direct special attention.

Jonathan Saville was born of poor, but industrious, parents, at Great Horton Bank Top, in the parish of Bradford, on the 9th of December, 1759. His early life was overcast with adversity and misfortune: when about three years of age it was his unhappy lot to be deprived of the care of a pious mother,—a painful and distressing circumstance deeply affecting his future prospects in life. When about seven years old, he was removed from the penury of his father's house to become an inmate of the poor house. Here, however he remained no long time, the overseers being determined to put him out as an apprentice. Against the

remonstrances and entreaties of his poor father, young Jonathan was duly apprenticed. He remained a very short time with his first master, being turned over to a man who had the working of certain coal mines in the neighbourhood.

Unfortunately his second master seems to have had but a sprinkling of humanity, and Jonathan became one among many other poor lads, who suffered from his unfeeling and brutal disposition. So laborious and heavy were the tasks which this unkind master imposed upon his young servant, that he sunk beneath the hardship, and his master found it necessary to remove him from the drudgery of the coal-pit, lest perchance other and more serious consequences might ensue. "When he took me from the coal-pit, (to use Jonathan's own expression,) I was more dead than alive, my strength was quite gone, and my soul was sick within me." He was now kept at home, and employed at the spinning wheel. The cloud which hung over him seemed for a while to brighten, and Jonathan began somewhat to enjoy and relish life, the more so being partly relieved from the cruelty of his master.

Three or four years had thus rolled over his head, when one cold winter's day, while sitting at his wheel in the passage of the house, (the spot he usually occupied,) he became chill and very cold. The wind whistled along the passage, and the house being situate on a bleak part of the hills, Jonathan might well shiver in the keenness of the northern blast. He spun the wheel with re-doubled velocity, but all of no avail, his

fingers grew stiff, and shaking with cold he determined to risk all consequences, and spend five minutes at the kitchen fire. Simple as all this may appear it was a source of much consideration before he even dare leave his work for such a purpose. While warming himself one of his master's daughters came in. The poor little fellow apprehended danger, but stood with his hands extended towards the fire, thawing his frozen fingers. Thinking that he was neglecting his work, or, (which is by far the more probable) prompted by the spirit of her father, she pushed Jonathan from the fire, accompanying her treatment with a well-timed blow. Unable to recover himself he fell upon the floor, and with such violence and in such a position that his thigh bone was broken. For a while he lay upon the floor, trembling lest further violence should be experienced : at length accompanied by threats and menaces from the brutal Amazon who stood over him, he managed to crawl, literally to crawl, and that with the greatest possible difficulty into an adjoining room, where he lay down on a bed, in the most excruciating agony.

Soon after this occurrence, Jonathan's master came home, and being told by his daughter that the lad had left his work in a fit of sulkiness and gone to bed, he immediately went into Jonathan's room, and ordered the poor sufferer, with terrible threats, to arise and go to his work at the wheel, at the same time using the most abusive language. Jonathan's heart-rending entreaties, alike with his piercing moans, were of no avail, and to use his own language " I tumbled off the bed

as well as I could ;” he then endeavoured to stand with the support of a chair, but his thigh bent under him, and he fell prostrate on the ground. With a species of incredible inhumanity, the monster who was standing over him, seized him by the coat collar, dragged him into the passage, and forced him to sit and spin the rest of the day !

Before we proceed in the history of this shameless cruelty, let us pause. For this poor, inoffensive, hard working lad, the tear of sympathy cannot but be shed. The cruelties which he suffered, the hardships he endured, and the merciless tyranny under which he lived during his boyhood, was such, as to affect, deeply affect him in after life. His cruel master has long since gone to his reward ; there are his descendants however, and it is out of respect to these that the writer withholds the name of one who deserves to be branded with disgrace. Although Jonathan’s cruel and tyrant master knew full well the state of his charge, no surgeon was called in to set the thigh, and no attention paid him by any in the house ; the very moans of the poor sufferer were laughed at, his distracted countenance became a source for ridicule, and had he not been blessed with a strong constitution, he must have sunk beneath the affliction, indeed his recovery approaches nigh to a miracle. As he lay down at night to sleep, it was his practice to hold the bone as near in its proper place as he could imagine ; but being obliged to rise early in the morning to his work, his recovery was necessarily protracted and tedious, in fact he never did properly

recover, and the accident became the cause of his present diminutive stature.

We cannot avoid noticing in this the overruling hand of Providence, Jonathan subsequently becomes an eminent character in the church. His talents which are of no mean order, gain esteem wherever they are called into action, whether in the pulpit, on the missionary platform, or in addressing the Sunday school scholar. And of those who have thus been favored—who cannot remember anything that “little Jonathan” advances? His very appearance attracts attention, and it is not easy to forget the tales or sentiments which he may strive to impress upon the mind. It is a pleasing sight to see a swarm of children around the venerable old man, while with breathless attention they listen to what he advances; an impression is made upon their minds, a principle is implanted, and in many instances all their ideas of good are associated with “little Jonathan.” But it is not merely to the infant mind that Jonathan has been of service.

Three or four years were spent under the inhospitable roof of his master, who at length feeling anxious to be rid of his charge, made application to the overseers of Thornton, who replied that such a cripple was fit for no place but the workhouse. Jonathan was accordingly sent back to Horton; and to his equal pleasure and surprise the exchange was for the better. The master of the workhouse was a kind-hearted man, he became interested in the welfare of the poor sufferer now brought under his care, and applied himself with

great attention to render him as comfortable and easy as possible. Nutritious food, gentle exercise, and a cold bath two or three times a week, assisted a naturally good constitution to regain considerable strength and eventually to recover (though with a deformed body,) from the effects of long ill usage.

One of the inmates of the workhouse was an old pensioner, who became Jonathan's schoolmaster and taught him to read with tolerable accuracy. Having always experienced a thirst for knowledge he applied himself with zeal and industry to the acquirement of all the information the old pensioner was able to impart; and having strength to work at his usual employment, he was induced, after laboring the accustomed hours, to use extra exertions; and thus he realized a small fund, which, coupled with the donations of those who pitied his misfortunes, enabled him to attend an evening school in the village, where his education was further advanced by being taught to write a fair hand and cast accounts. These unhappily were the extent of the advantages he derived from education.

Upon one occasion, while conversing with the writer, Jonathan observed, that he should never forget his feelings when, by the aid of crutches, he could manage to walk. There was in the poor-house an old and blind man, who had long expressed a desire to attend the church, at Bradford, but being unable to obtain a guide, and too poor to purchase a dog, it was his unhappy lot to be deprived of those means which otherwise he would have willingly and joyfully attended. To

this poor old man, Jonathan, assured that he could now manage the journey to Bradford church, cheerfully volunteered his services. Accordingly next Sabbath-day, to the arrival of which they had looked with anxious and longing hearts, they both left the work-house at an early hour, and trudged away to church—"the halt leading the blind." This they continued from Sabbath to Sabbath; and it was an affecting picture, which not infrequently arrested the gaze of the passers-by, to behold the youthful cripple creeping along as well as he was able upon his crutches, and the blind man with his left hand stretched forth and placed on Jonathan's shoulder, following in his footsteps, his furrowed face uplifted to that sun he could not see, while in his right hand a long stick assisted his tottering knees.

It was not long ere Jonathan was enabled to throw away his crutches; and now that he had regained the use of his limbs, he felt anxious to learn some trade or manual art by which he might earn his bread. The native independence of his spirit forbade him to eat the bread of the indigent, and he left the poor-house, never more to enter within its precincts, except to console the afflicted, to cheer the dying, or to preach the gospel of peace and proclaim the glad word of salvation to its inmates.

His next place of abode was the house of the parish overseer, who, being a sterling old Methodist, felt and exhibited a concern for the welfare of Jonathan both as it regarded his temporal and spiritual interests. It is worthy of record that the overseer, John Murgatroyd,

was a member of the second Methodist class meeting ever instituted and held in Yorkshire. During Jonathan's continuance under the hospitable roof of the overseer, he was kindly taught the business of a warper and what was of equal importance, he had frequent opportunities of attending the means of grace, for which, happily, he had always a relish; from infancy, in fact, he had been a subject of the strivings of the spirit. A circumstance related by himself, and to which insertion shall here be given, may be deemed of interest as developing the deep impression religious services and ordinances made upon his infant mind. One Sunday, when Jonathan was but about four years of age, he and his father wandered to Bradford; attracted by a vast crowd they were led to listen to the discourse of a preacher who was, with great earnestness, addressing the people. No sooner did Jonathan fix his eye upon the holy man of God thus engaged, than it became rivetted; and young as he was, no other object could divert that attention which he was thus induced to give. Who this preacher was his father did not inform him, but his countenance, his gesture, his general appearance, were so indelibly fixed upon his mind, that at the distance of sixty years from that time, on being accidentally introduced into a room on the walls of which was suspended a well-executed portrait of Whitfield, he immediately recognized it as the likeness of the man he had heard preach under the above circumstances.

Having lived four years with John Murgatroyd, he came to reside in Halifax, in 1782, being then twenty-

three years of age. Shortly after his removal to the latter place, he engaged himself with Mr. Swaine, at his manufactory at Cross Hills, as a warper. With the exception of a short interval in which he lived at Lightcliffe, his abode has been at Halifax, where he has always maintained a character of unimpeachable fidelity. To shew the strength and aptness of his mind at this time, the following anecdote will suffice. When he was received into Mr. Swaine's workshop, he sustained a situation which one of the other workmen had hoped would have been given to his daughter. A feeling of animosity was thus engendered in this man's mind, and he did not fail, on every opportunity, to accuse Jonathan before his master, with the evident object of obtaining his dismissal. One day in particular, the man having been unusually peevish with Jonathan, and feeling persuaded he had found some deficiency which, if properly worked up and represented to Mr. Swaine, would procure the new warper's dismissal, made no scruples of immediately going into an adjoining room to the master. While out upon his errand, Jonathan, who was well aware of its purport, taking a piece of red chalk from his pocket, wrote with it in legible characters on the wall,—“Accuse not a servant unto his master, lest he curse thee and thou be found guilty.” When the man returned and beheld the inscription on the wall, he blushed, and went quietly to his work. Never, after that, was he found guilty of such conduct. Mr. Swaine shortly after came into the room and saw the writing, and it is needless to observe that Jonathan,

whom he had hitherto highly respected, rose still higher in his estimation.

In the year 1784, two years after he came to live at Halifax, the ministry of Mr. Benson became, in the hands of God, the means of renewing and deepening those impressions of the necessity of inward religion which he had received in early life. He was induced to become a member of the Methodist society, and attended a class-meeting of which Mr. Robert Emmett was leader. Jonathan now became a new man, divine grace having wrought a radical change of heart; and the church, since that day, has been ornamented by his profession, and benefitted by his zeal and usefulness. In the lower, and at that time arduous, office of a prayer-leader, his labors were greatly successful. The surrounding neighbourhood, comprehending a circuit of six or eight miles, was traversed by little Jonathan, and a small band of associates, for the purpose of establishing and holding prayer-meetings. Equally careless of the wintry storm, the bitter frost, the piercing winds, or the burning summer's sun, Jonathan was found travelling over hills and exploring vallies, calling the poor cottagers together, who lived far from any place of worship and who could not call the Sabbath a delight, giving them a word of exhortation and then praying with and for them. It is not too much to say, that no man, living in the district comprised by this history, has been in labors more abundant than the subject of the present sketch. This is not written by the way of compliment, truth dictates the avowal; and though now

at an advanced age, such is his zeal for the cause of the Redeemer that many of his junior brethren have cause to feel ashamed of their exertions, when placed in comparison with those of this veteran christian.

After occupying the capacity of a prayer-leader for the space of fourteen years, he was appointed to become the leader of a class ; a charge which he took with fear and trembling, and not without a renewed act of self-dedication. In the year 1803, he was called to the office of a local preacher, though then in the 43rd year of his age. Into the work of the ministry he was afraid to enter, and submitted to Mr. Gaulter (who we have seen was this year appointed to the circuit,) that having arrived at middle age and being destitute of an acquaintance with theological writers, whether it was to be expected that he could accompany, not to say outstrip, the progressing intelligence of the laboring community ; but this as well as many other objections were over-ruled, the superintendant and also the society being assured of our friend's abilities. He accordingly began to preach, and from that time forth, has the rather sought than shunned opportunities to declare the whole counsel of God.

It is in the high character of a local preacher, that we are led to view Jonathan with veneration and esteem. The popularity he attained at the commencement of his career, has followed and attends him even now. And hundreds both in this and other and more distant circuits, will never have erased from their memory his solemn admonitions, his impressive cautions,

his appropriate and original ideas. The talents of Jonathan Saville eminently qualified him for the Missionary platform, and there, perhaps, he shines to the best advantage. As an advocate for the heathen none can make a better appeal to the benevolence and charity of an audience. The limits of the present work prevent, or the writer would otherwise have given a few outlines of his Missionary speeches—speeches, to which the most eminent ministers have listened with satisfaction, and still remember with pleasure and delight.

We must now bring this sketch to a close. Jonathan is a living character, and the publication of a more enlarged detail of his history might thwart certain entertained intentions. For these reasons the writer withholds, at this time, the publication of many interesting facts, and by no person is he urged so much to adopt this line of procedure as by Jonathan Saville himself.

To revert to our history—the year 1803 was rendered remarkable from the fact that two chapels were erected in the circuit; one at Sowerby-Bridge, and another at Ripponden.

A third preacher was again called out for the Halifax circuit in 1804; accordingly we find the stations standing thus:—Messrs. J. Gaulter, J. Crossley, and J. Needham. It appears there had been an increase of members, the number being now 1310; it is also gratifying to learn that a decided improvement had taken place in the temporal concerns of the circuit. Notwithstanding the repeated calls upon the liberality of the people, (there was a collection also throughout the cir-

cuit in 1804 for one of the York chapels,) the funds manifested considerable additions to former efforts, especially in the yearly collection.

In the course of the year it was thought expedient to have new trust deeds and trustees for the chapel in Halifax. Accordingly after mature consideration a new deed was executed, the following being the trustees. An asterisk is attached to those now living.

ROBERT EMMETT, Halifax.	*J. O. BATES, Halifax.
RICHARD EMMETT, do.	J. SUTCLIFFE, Willow Hall.
ELKANAH WILD, do.	J. WALKER, Mearclough Bottom
JOHN ASHWORTH, do.	JOSEPH WALKER, do.
E. ASHWORTH, do.	THOS. FEARNside, do.
WILLIAM HATTON, do.	THOMAS EMMETT, Halifax.
JOHN FOURNESS, do.	JOSEPH EMMETT, do.
ISAAC PRIESTLEY, do.	*JAMES METCALFE, do.
*GEORGE WALKER, do.	JOSEPH TAYLOR, do.
*JOHN POOL, do.	RICHARD WINNARD, do.
JOHN BATES, SEN. do.	*JAMES FARRAR, do.

At the conference in 1805, and which was held at Sheffield, Messrs. Joseph Sutcliffe, Zechariah Yewdall, and James Needham were appointed to the circuit. Brighouse being considered of sufficient importance, and connected with a large part of the circuit, was united with Halifax upon the minutes of conference. The numbers in society stood at 1400.

An enquiry was instituted if something could not be done to meet the wants of the rising generation? The suggestion was followed out, and a cottage near the chapel, (which was erected in 1803 by the trustees, partly as a vestry and for other purposes) was taken and fitted up as a Sunday school. A canvass was made for teachers and children, and the school formally opened,

May 15th, 1805,* the number of children being about 50, which in the course of a fortnight increased to 100. The first superintendants (being also the founders) of the school were Mr. Robert Emmett, Mr. John Ashworth and his brother Mr. Edmund, Mr. Isaac Priestley, Mr. Elkanah Wilde, Mr. James Walker, Mr. Cousins and a Mr. Jardine, excise officers; Mr. John Bates being the secretary.

In the year 1813, the Sunday school was removed to its present situation—the vestry of South Parade chapel, and in subsequent years a branch school was formed in a room in Northgate, which was removed into Jail lane, and thence to Black-horse fold. This was afterwards given up in favor of Wesley chapel school.

In 1806 Mr. Needham was succeeded by Mr. Wm. M^r Kittrick, the two other preachers remaining a second year in the circuit. Consent of conference was obtained for building a chapel at Southowram, and the present chapel was erected during the course of the year. A spacious burial-ground is attached, and the chapel being built in a central situation commands a respectable congregation. In appearance the chapel is plain though neat, the interior is admirably arranged and accommodation is afforded for 400 persons.

Such was the flourishing state of the connexion, at this period, that the erection of another chapel in the

* On account of conflicting opinions, I am unable to ascertain to which denomination the honor of the introduction of Sunday Schools into Halifax belongs; the Wesleyan Methodists however were the first to introduce these Institutions into the Parish of Halifax, one being formed at Bradshaw prior to the year 1790.

circuit speedily followed that at Southowram. For a long time a want of greater accommodation than a mere room afforded had been experienced at Elland; but the erection of a chapel there was opposed by the trustees of Greetland chapel, who feared the injury of its congregation and trust fund. Their objections at length were superseded, the increased importance of the neighbourhood as well as the cheering prospects of the society, demanded increased accommodation, and the erection of a chapel commenced in 1807. Elland chapel is the largest country chapel in the circuit, being capable of containing about 600 persons, Commodious burial ground is attached, a vestry has also been erected behind the chapel, and on the east side a large school-room has of late years been erected.

At the conference of 1807, held in Liverpool, Messrs. Suter, Bartholomew, and M'Kitrick were appointed to labor in the circuit; the number of members were 1770. The following year Mr. Henry S. Hopwood succeeded the third preacher.

To the deep regret of the society, Mr. Suter was removed from Halifax in 1809, having labored in the circuit for two years, during which period nearly 200 members had been added to the society. Mr. Jonathan Crowther and Mr. John Doncaster were appointed to the circuit, the third preacher remaining another year.

In the course of the year the chapel at Sowerby Bridge having been found too small for the congregation underwent an enlargement. In the early part of the same year the Halifax society lost one of its oldest members—

Isaac Wade, a name not for the first time mentioned in these pages. He died in the 84th year of his age.

We have previously referred to the painful state of affairs at Brighthouse during this period. The society however having regained their chapel, we find the following upon the Minutes of 1810, "Halifax, and our chapel at Brighthouse, Jonathan Crowther, John Doncaster, Abram E. Farrar." The numbers in society were this year stated to be 1950. The preachers had long labored under great inconvenience with respect to their place of residence under the chapel, when it was determined to erect the present preacher's house in South Parade. Mr. J. Crowther was its first occupant.

A promise having been elicited from the Rev. Jabez Bunting, he was, by consent of the stationing committee in 1811, put down for Halifax; the Rev. Messrs. Wm. Leach and Mark Dawes being his colleagues. An idea had previously been entertained of affording greater accommodation for the increased and increasing congregation, than the extent of the old chapel would afford. At the Sept. quarter meeting the subject underwent considerable discussion, and the enlargement of the chapel was determined upon. No individual was more eminently qualified for supporting a measure of this kind than the worthy superintendant of the circuit. The business was entered upon in a spirited manner by the society in general, and preparations for the enlargement were speedily made. The chapel was extended to the length of twenty-five yards and three quarters, its breadth, twenty one yards and a quarter, remaining

the same. The roof being taken off, the walls were raised several feet. It is much to be regretted that a dull, heavy, and unmeaning appearance was given to the chapel, by the erection of an additional front wall, the old one being deemed insufficient of itself to carry the weight of the new roof.

Upon the completion of the chapel a placard, (about the size of a couple of these pages) made its appearance, stating that on the 15th of Nov. the chapel would be re-opened by the Rev. Messrs. J. Wood, J. Bunting, and R. Watson. The services were well attended and collections amounting to the respectable sum of £130 3s. 11½d. were made on the occasion, the subscriptions amounted to about £400. A subsequent alteration was made by the addition of another pew round the gallery by contracting the aisles. Greater accommodation was thus afforded, and the chapel made capable of containing a congregation of two thousand people.

There existed but one defect in the chapel,—the great and unwarrantable distance of the pulpit from the front of the gallery, produced by the alterations of 1811. The removal of this defect, and the introduction of an organ, (whereby the dull and meagre appearance of the east end was obviated) will be noticed at the conclusion of the following chapter.

The extensive burial ground adjoining the chapel is one of the finest places for sepulture in the town. To the ground originally attached to the chapel, an extensive plot was added about 1804, making it 84 yards long and 37 broad. Upon entering the grave yard we

find nothing worthy of particular notice; there are several family vaults and a few tombs enclosed by iron pallisadoes. The oldest grave stone is in the North-West corner of the yard, and has inscribed the following—"Here was interred the body of Sarah Aked, who departed this life, Dec. 1st, 1781, in the 58th year of her age." The reader cannot expect to find inscriptions from the tomb stones, however worthy they may be, copied into the present work. Nor will the writer attempt to pourtray his feelings while entering this solemn repository of the dead, and treading the soil beneath which slumber the sacred ashes of the early Methodist, and of the faithful minister, mingled with those whose recent grave rends afresh the broken ties of affection.

No sorrow now hangs clouding on their brow,
 No bloodless malady empales their face,
 No age drops on their hairs his silver snow,
 No nakedness their bodies doth embrace,
 No poverty themselves and theirs disgrace,
 No fear of death the joy of life devours,
 No unchaste sleep their precious time deflowers,
 No loss, no grief, no change wait on the winged hours.

* * * * *

For things that pass are past, and in this field
 The indeficient spring no winter fears;
 The trees together fruit and blossom yield,
 The unfading lily leaves of silver bears,
 And crimson rose a scarlet garment wears;
 And all of the saints' bodies grow,
 Not, as they wont, on baser earth below:
 Three rivers here, of milk, and wine, and honey flow.

CHAPTER XIII.

State of the society during 1811 and 1812. Establishment of a Missionary society in Halifax. 1818, the circuit is again divided—the congregations decrease. New chapel at Mount Tabor—revival at Stainland. Rev. Messrs. James and Lloyd—the cause revives—the Tract Society is established—remarkable anecdote—death of Mr. Lloyd. Female clothing society. Room opened in Arches Street. 1829, Wesley Chapel erected,—Hopwood-Lane School Room. New Chapel at Sowerby-Bridge. State of affairs in 1833-4. Alterations in South Parade Chapel—conclusion.

DURING the years 1811 and 1812, a daring spirit of insubordination and riot manifested itself among the workmen connected with machinery. The Methodist preachers were among the first to declaim against such a mischievous feeling being harboured by any of the members in their society ; and the superintendant (Mr. Bunting) especially gained the hatred of the hordes of Luddites* which abounded in the neighbourhood—a hatred which was considerably increased by the following circumstance.

It was intended to bury, at the Methodist chapel in Halifax, a man who had been shot while attempting to

* So called from the signatures to the threatening letters which they sent to the masters employing machinery, and all of which professed to be the missals of "General Ludd," which was, by the bye, a fictitious name.

break into the mill of Mr. Cartwright, near Cleckheaton, on Saturday night, April 12th, 1812. Vast preparations were made for the funeral, and the corpse was preceded by a procession of his fellow "Luddites," by whom his death was considered in the light of an honorable martyrdom! It was generally expected, by them, that Mr. Bunting would perform the burial service, but he refused, and the work devolved upon the junior preacher. The chapel-yard was crowded with a dense throng, and owing to manifested displeasure on the part of the people, Mr. Dawes was obliged to make a somewhat abrupt exit. Ever after that time the most determined hostility was shown by the working classes against Mr. Bunting, and to such a pitch did their black malignity arrive as to issue the positive threat that his life should be taken. The object of this threat however would in no wise be deterred from his duty; he expressed in one of his discourses at the chapel, his unshaken confidence in God, and in doing this adopted an expression which has never been forgotten by those who heard it—"there was never a bullet (said he) without a billet." His friends, however, judged it hazardous for him to proceed to his country appointments alone.

At the conference of 1812, (held at Leeds) the same preachers were again stationed for Halifax, the number of members being registered at 2050. At this conference, Sowerby-Bridge became the head of a circuit, the preachers appointed to labor there, being Mr. Thos. Jackson, sen. and Mr. Joseph Agar. The latter preacher

(a young man) exchanged quarterly with Mr. Dawes, of the Halifax circuit. This alteration materially eased the Halifax local preachers, whose duties we have previously noticed as being oppressive and arduous.

During this year there arose another source of disquiet, from the declared wish that in a certain instance the people should adhere to the rules of conference and the usages of the connexion; for it is a somewhat singular circumstance that the law of conference regarding ticket money had not been generally attended to in the Halifax circuit. In 1782 the superintendants of each circuit were enjoined to remind the several societies of this standing law of Methodism; to explain the reasonableness of this, and be careful to enforce its observance. This was most earnestly enjoined upon the preachers again in 1788, but hitherto without proper effect in the Halifax circuit. The rule, however, was clearly explained by the respected superintendant, and the way laid open for the accomplishment of so desirable an object. As might have been anticipated, there were many malcontents in various parts of the circuit.

At the last conference to which allusion has been made, the following directions concerning the weekly and quarterly collections in the classes were given:—
“ We once more recommend most earnestly to all our societies, a strict compliance with that original rule which Mr. Wesley himself established at the first institution of Methodism; and which requires, that, upon an average, each member shall pay, for the support of the work, one penny per week in the classes; and one

shilling per quarter, in addition to the weekly contributions, at the renewal of the tickets." But it was not until after the conference of 1813, when the Rev. Messrs. Atmore, T. Vasey and H. Ranson were appointed for the circuit, that the rule relating to the quarterage was put in force. By this time the opposition had partially subsided, and no classes, save a few in the country parts of the circuit, seem to have opposed to any material extent the enforcement of the rule. Some allowance must be made for the people, on account of their non-compliance with the rule enjoining *weekly* contribution; it was their general custom, when the preacher renewed their tickets, to pay in one sum what should have been paid in weekly pence, and thus they inferred the thirteen-pence to be for the ticket. To none other than this source can the above uneasiness be traced; a laxity rather on the part of the leaders than of the private members of society.

During the continuance of Mr. Atmore in the circuit the first Missionary meeting was held in Halifax, and an auxiliary society instituted. The period when missionary societies were formed in England was an important and peculiarly interesting era in the history of Methodism. The degenerate state of the heathen which had long called for the sympathies and regard of christian communities, now began to arouse the apathy and call forth the energies of christians. It would be out of character with the spirit and intent of the present work to enter at length into the subject, yet it cannot but excite the feelings of the christian while even casually

adverting to the Missionary exertions of the Wesleyan community, and to the happy effects of the "glorious gospel of the blessed God." Rays of light have been thrown athwart the gloom which overspread the heathen world; the banner of a saving cross has been unfurled and now streams triumphant, on spots formerly desecrated by the most barbarous rites; myriads of deluded spirits have been plucked as brands from the burning, and at the present time about two hundred and seventy missionaries are scattering the blessed seed in foreign climes, under the auspices of the Wesleyan Methodist Society.*

It is a source of high gratification that, although Halifax was not the first to form an auxiliary missionary society, it *was* the first to copy the noble example of that district (Leeds) which led the way: and it is with peculiar interest I refer the reader to the fact of a meeting being held on Wednesday, Nov. 10th, 1813, in the chapel at Halifax, which was the *second* Methodist Missionary meeting held in England.

A preparatory sermon was preached on Tuesday

* The following additional information will doubtless be deemed of interest—in the present year, the Missionary Society occupies about 173 principal stations, upon which the Missionaries above mentioned labour; its catechists and salaried schoolmasters, &c. are about 260, the assistants not salaried being about 1400. Five printing establishments are supported on the Foreign stations. The members of society are upwards of 52,000, while the total number of hearers may be reckoned at about one hundred and twenty thousand. In the schools there are upwards of forty thousand adults and children. The missionaries employ more than twenty different languages, into several of which the scriptures have been translated. Well may the Methodist Society lay peculiar emphasis upon the oft repeated phrase. "What hath God wrought?"

evening to a large congregation ; and on the following morning a provisional committee met, at half-past ten o'clock, to arrange the business for the general meeting. Upwards of thirty ministers, and a much larger number of gentlemen friendly to the cause, were present. At two o'clock the doors of the chapel were opened, when the gallery was soon filled with ladies,* although the weather was unfavorable ; while the lower part of the chapel was crowded with the other sex.

The Rev. James Wood opened the meeting with singing and prayer ; after which Richard Fawcett, Esq. of Bradford was called to the chair. The meeting was subsequently addressed by the Rev. Messrs. Richard Reece, Matthew Lumb, Richard Watson, James Wood, Charles Atmore, J. Braithwaite, Richard Waddy, J. Buckley, and several other ministers and friends from the Leeds district. The Rev. Jabez Bunting preached in the evening to a crowded congregation, and thus ended one of the most delightful days ever spent.

The following year the first anniversary meeting was held in the same chapel, when no less a number than fourteen resolutions were passed, and twenty-eight speeches made ! The treasurer's receipts for the year amounted to £1292 14s. 8d., but it must be borne in mind, that the district then comprised thirteen circuits ; notwithstanding, the receipts were a sound and sterling proof of the missionary zeal of the times.

* Till within the last few years the custom has usually prevailed, to reserve the gallery for the Ladies, on occasions like the one alluded to. It has now however fallen into disuse, the gallantry of a congregation not being equal to that of the Missionary Committee.

It will not be out of place to mention that the treasurer's receipts for the year ending Decr. 1835, were £1039 7s. 8½d. But at this time the district comprises but seven circuits.

In the report adopted at the second annual meeting, the establishment of Juvenile Associations was strongly urged, and the especial co-operation of female friends. This recommendation was not the mere phantom of a speculative mind, for the experiment had, in other places, been successfully made. The effect of this request was, that on the following anniversary, (1817) the sum of £30 5s. 5½d. was added to the Missionary fund by the Juvenile Association. It is to be regretted that this Association holds no annual public meeting, otherwise it might be the means of inspiring the youthful members of the society to increased exertions.

Owing to the circumstance of Sowerby-Bridge and the preaching places in its neighbourhood being taken from Halifax, the society in 1813 was reduced to 1400. At the conference in 1814 the Rev. R. Martin succeeded the third preacher, and in addition the Rev. A. Suter became supernumerary. In 1815 the Rev. Messrs. C. Kirkpatrick, M. Day, and R. Wood, were appointed to the circuit.—Members 1300. Samuel Broadbent, a young man from Greetland, received an appointment this year for Ceylon.

1816. It was found advisable to dispense with the services of a third married preacher in the Halifax circuit. Mr. Wood was therefore removed to Sowerby-Bridge. The society received an addition of 200 members.

In 1817 the society suffered the loss by death of one of the supernumerary preachers—Mr. Suter. At the conference of this year, the Revds. R. Hopkins and J. Fowler were appointed for Halifax, and I am sorry to record a slight diminution in the society. The same preachers tarried a second year in the circuit, and at the renewal of their appointment in 1818 the society numbered 1300. Cleckheaton and Heckmondwike became this year the head of a circuit, to which the Rev. R. Heap was appointed. It was placed under the Leeds district, and the preacher changed once in six weeks with the Birstal preachers, and once in six weeks with the Dewsbury preachers. Brighouse, Hipperholme, and Hove Edge, though attached to the Cleckheaton circuit, remained on the Halifax plan a short time, being supplied by the local preachers.

The Rev. W. Myles and the Rev. C. Whiteside were stationed for the circuit in 1819; the number of members being 1170.* At the conference held in 1820, the same preachers were re-appointed; the society had lost forty members.

It is pleasing, to record the erection of a Methodist chapel at Mount Tabor. After the death of the Rev. John Bates, minister of Mixenden chapel, a dispute arose among the trustees of the chapel, in the election of a successor. Being unable to agree in the nomination, the trustees divided, and while part remained at the

* This number may be depended upon for its accuracy, though in the Minutes of Conference for 1819 the number of members in the Halifax circuit was stated to be 1780,---the error was probably a typographical one.

chapel, the other part encouraged the local preachers to commence preaching at Mount Tabor. Thomas Birtwhistle and Jonathan Saville were among the first to break up this new ground. A barn was opened by Edward Birtwhistle, who resided on the spot; and was employed by the congregation until the completion of a large room, which was occupied as a preaching-place for two or three years. A class was then formed, and eight or nine individuals enrolled their names, over whom James Rothera was appointed leader. The cause continued to prosper; the number in society being twenty, and the congregations being large, a plot of ground was obtained, and a chapel forthwith erected. In 1824, the chapel underwent considerable enlargement, and though a somewhat heavy debt was then incurred, it has not been particularly oppressive, nearly every sitting being let and the congregations exceedingly numerous. The chapel stands on rising ground, and its interior arrangements vary from those of the other country chapels in the circuit, the building being oblong and the galleries long and narrow. The chapel will comfortably hold a congregation of 400 persons. Burial-ground partly surrounds the chapel, and during the present year a plain but commodious school-room has been erected by subscription, near the chapel, which will contain about 300 children.

A revival it seems was experienced in Stainland and the neighbourhood, about 1824, the Rev. T. Preston being the superintendant of the Sowerby-Bridge circuit. While there was a blessed unity and love among the

members of society, there was also a spirit of agonizing prayer for the out-pouring of the Holy Ghost, and the society steadily progressed in numbers ; in fact, the zeal engendered by the revival stimulated the exertions of the people for several years, and at the present time there are connected with Stainland no less than seven classes, eight local preachers, and upwards of a hundred members of society. A school-room has been also erected in the upper part of Stainland.

It will not be amiss to add, that a small society has existed for a number of years at Outlane (at present in the Huddersfield circuit,) which had its rise at Stainland. A Sabbath School is attached to the chapel,

We must now return to the year 1821, when the Rev. John James and the Rev. E. B. Lloyd were appointed to the circuit. The fame of these men preceded their arrival, and their reception was such that the feelings of the people were aroused and the cause again began to revive. Both these lamented ministers entered into their work with great zeal, and the result of their labors during the first year of their continuance in the circuit was highly satisfactory ; the number of members being 1290, as recorded by the Conference in 1822.

No opportunity of doing good was left unemployed by either of the preachers, and it was during the last mentioned year that the Halifax Wesleyan Tract Society was formed. The mode of distributing religious Tracts has been made a means of effecting considerable and lasting good. Individuals have been visited

who could have been reached in no other way; "a word in season" has been given, which if delivered in any other manner, would probably have been fruitless; the sacred light of truth has been kindled in dark and obscure places,—a light which has shed its radiancy on the path of many a poor wanderer and guided his feet into the way of peace. Of the fine opportunities afforded the Distributor of Tracts for giving warning and instruction, we cannot form too high an estimate, besides the incalculable benefit which may arise from but one of these silent messengers of peace being circulated among families who know not Christ nor the power of his resurrection. The consideration of the amount of vice which has been counteracted, or wretchedness which has been consoled by this means is pleasing to the philanthropist as well as the christian; specially so when we remember that that mighty engine the Press is employed in the production of that which debases and weakens the mind,—when infidelity is pouring forth streams of evil through this source, is it not well to counteract such evil, to bear down such opposition by meeting the enemy upon his own ground? And most certainly Tract Societies are well calculated for this—yea, even to achieve that which the ministry, in some cases, would fail to accomplish.

Actuated by these and similar considerations, a few individuals met in the vestry of South Parade chapel on Friday evening, Feb. 1st, 1822, when it was resolved that a Tract Society should be formed, to be supported by voluntary contributions.

This valuable institution continued its exertions for several years. The reports furnished by each distributor were cheering and animating; in fact a week seldom expired without some pleasing anecdote being recorded. Mr. Thomas Walker, the father of the writer, (but now no more,) had for many years the management of the Depository.*

The good effected by the Tract society was almost incalculable, and for seven years did the institution continue to flourish; every part of the town was regularly visited, and thus a wide and ample field for usefulness presented itself. Never had any christian community in Halifax such access to its inhabitants—in one respect the whole town was theirs; consequences the most glorious were anticipated, nor were the wishes and prayers of the church in vain. The good seed began to germinate, but just when bearing the most beauteous promise of a rich harvest, the zeal of the husbandmen began to fail. About the year 1829 the system upon which the distribution of tracts was conducted underwent a change. The depository was made useless, the monthly meetings of the distributors were abolished, and all intercourse of these functionaries ceased. A

* The writer well remembers the following anecdote being recorded by a distributor;—there was a dissolute character, in a certain part of the town who could not be prevailed upon to read the tracts weekly delivered him. On one occasion the tract which came in course of circulation was the narrative of "William Kelly;" having a Wood Cut on the Title Page, representing the subject of the story, sneaking bareheaded from the presence of a storming hostess, who had seized his hat as security for a tavern score, to which with an angry frowning countenance she points. The tract, thus embellished, was left at the house of the profligate individual before mentioned; and to him, strange to say, a circumstance precisely similar to

certain number of tracts, each differing from the rest, was taken out by the distributor, and changed from house to house every Sunday. Economical as this plan was, the consequences upon its adoption were as we have stated ; that feeling which had been productive of so much benefit subsided, the yearly meetings ceased, and the institution itself, once a bright and glowing orb, at last went down in obscurity. There want not laborers in the church, neither, I am persuaded, does there lack the means ; what then should retard the re-establishment of the Tract society in its original healthfulness and activity ?

that which arrested Kelly in his career, had occurred the very evening before (Saturday.) His hat being detained for an ale score, by the landlady of a neighbouring public house, he had hastened homeward, bare-headed, incensed and ashamed, and had retired to rest, raging like a she-bear deprived of her cubs. Sunday morning found him sullen and perturbed; he hurried down stairs half dressed, and flung himself into a chair which stood beside the breakfast table, when lo! the first object that caught his attention, was the frontispiece of the Tract, just described, and which was placed, may we not say providentially? full in his view. Glancing at it with an air of fierceness, he seized it, and striking the table with his clenched fist, uttered a fearful imprecation, exclaiming " Those villanous Methodists ! if they hav'n't got me painted up already to be a laughing stock for the town ; here I am without a hat. I'll be even with them." He continued raving, till the tempest of his ire had somewhat exhausted itself in oaths and menaces ; then prompted by curiosity, he thought he would ascertain what they would say concerning him. The door of his house being ajar, a sudden gust of wind wafted the Tract from the table to the fire place, he followed it with his eyes ; the draught forced it part of the way up the chimney, when he rose and snatching it from behind the fire, exclaimed " the devil sha'n't have it," Curiosity being now excited to its highest pitch, breakfast was forgot, and he sat down to peruse the little narrative. He read, and read till his heart became affected. That day he went to the chapel, the bible was brought upon the table and read during the intervals of worship, in short, he became a reformed man, an upright christian.

In returning to the period whence we have diverged, it must be noticed that at the March quarter-day in 1823, the request was made for the preachers to remain in the circuit a third year. At the approach of conference the people were anxiously waiting for a ratification of their wishes, when, by a peculiar dispensation of providence, Mr. Lloyd was called into eternity, by the over-turning of a coach on which he was proceeding to the conference, held that year in Sheffield. Never scarce was a minister so sincerely regretted in his removal from the church; his memory is still embalmed, and the remembrance of his excellencies still inspires with mournful satisfaction those who were favored to sit under his ministry. I would refer the reader to the Methodist Magazine for 1824, page 78, for an excellent memoir of Mr. Lloyd, from the pen of his friend, (in whose grave the remains of this faithful minister are entombed)—a gentleman whose talents and discernment are neither unknown nor unappreciated by the Methodist body.

Though the life of Mr. James was spared, his constitution received a severe shock. The first address he delivered subsequent to his recovery was blessed to the conversion of several of the younger branches of the congregation in the town; one of whom, an excellent young woman, died happy in God the same day as Mr. James, (Nov. 6, 1832.) It may be necessary to observe that the labors of Mr. James, in connection with those of his colleagues, were blessed to the effecting of a most favorable change in the Halifax circuit, the num-

ber of members amounting to 1600.

It cannot be expected that the writer will enter into circumstances of but recent occurrence, nor is he aware (with the exception of the erection of chapels,) that anything remains of a nature demanding particular attention. His enquiries have principally been engaged in delineating the *early* rise and progress of Methodism—in yielding all intelligence relative to the primitive followers of Wesley, and now having given every information in his power and by which the history has been brought down to a period within the recollection of most of his readers, he conceives his task to be nearly ended. Were it proper to enter into events of recent occurrence the limits of this work would forbid, therefore he must content himself with pointing out the most prominent incidents in the history of the cause to the present time, and in doing this the reader must expect to be hurried over the ground at a more rapid pace.

A new chapel was opened at Ovenden, on the 23rd of April, 1824, by Mr. James. There had been no regular preaching established at this thriving village, though week-night service had for a number of years been held at Wheatley. The chapel stands in a central and pleasant situation, and will hold a congregation of 400 persons; a neat burial ground is attached.

For seven years the Methodists had occupied an hired room at Mount Pleasant, or Thornton Heights; but in 1824 they erected a neat and commodious chapel. Thornton is now in the Bingley circuit.

In 1824 the Revds. T. Lessey and W. Vevers were

appointed for the circuit, they were succeeded in 1827 by the Revds. J. Waterhouse and G. Marsland, who like their predecessors also continued three years in the circuit.

The year after Mr. Lessey's appointment to the circuit, there was an institution formed among the ladies of the Wesleyan congregation, called "The Female Clothing Society." The Institution commenced operations in the month of December, and has been the means of distributing quantities of articles of clothing to the poor and destitute; this society continues to flourish, and its members are influenced with unabated ardor. The Wesleyan ladies in Halifax are certainly deserving the highest plaudits, their zealous exertions in this and other institutions place them in an eminent point of view, as being inspired with a holy, philanthropic desire to benefit, to the greatest possible extent, their fellow-creatures. To their praise be it spoken.

We have already alluded to the flourishing state of the society; in 1825 it was deemed needful to call in a third preacher, (G. Chambers,) the succeeding year however two preachers only were stationed for the circuit, the society having decreased to 1460. In 1827, the members were reduced to 1390.

During Mr. Lessey's continuance in the circuit it was judged advisable to increase the accommodation for preaching in the town: the friends who resided in the westerly part of the town especially were sensible of the deficiency which existed. A prayer meeting had for a length of time been held at Daniel Gibson's, King

Cross Lane, on a Sunday morning, and the house being too small for the persons who regularly attended, rendered it evident that no neighbourhood had greater claims for increased accommodation. A room in Arches street was accordingly fitted up and opened, Feb. 1826, where divine service was celebrated on a Sunday afternoon, and also on a stated week-night. In a short time a Sunday school was formed at the same place, and thus the prospects of the Methodist society in that quarter of the town were extremely bright.

We have previously referred to the cause at Blackmires ; it seems to have been in a languishing condition about this time. In 1819 a small chapel, without a gallery, was built ; in 1825 the chapel was enlarged and a gallery erected, and the society increased ; for a while the fire burnt with ardor, but in 1828 not a dying ember—not a spark existed, and the chapel was without a member. Through the exertions of Mr. Waterhouse the chapel was again opened : it will hold a congregation of about 400 people. The society now numbers 60 members.

In the first year of Mr. Waterhouse's appointment, the congregation assembling in South-Parade Chapel was such that a second chapel became necessary. In October 1828 a few friends met to consider the propriety of erecting a new chapel, and their good will towards such a project was shewn by the subscription of £1000, entered into at that meeting. Considerable anxiety prevailed as to the site of the future erection ; a congregation being already collected in the west part

of the town, with no place of worship belonging any other denomination in the immediate neighbourhood, several of the friends in that quarter judged it the best situation for a new chapel. A plot of ground, however, in Broad Street (considered by a majority of the influential members of society, more eligible) presented itself, and was purchased, by consent of the quarterly meeting and the building committee; the premises with the intended buildings being settled on the Conference plan. On March 3rd, 1829, the foundation stone was laid, and an appropriate service performed, Mr. Waterhouse giving a suitable address.

The chapel was opened on Friday, Nov. 6th, 1829, when sermons were preached in the morning by the Rev. Adam Clarke, L. L. D. in the afternoon by the Rev. W. M. Bunting and in the evening by the Rev. J. Bunting, M. A. Every possible arrangement had been made for the occasion, and such as to reflect the highest credit upon the trustees and those friends who volunteered their services on the day of opening. With a view to the accommodation of persons from the country, —and partly, in order to afford to those friends whose active exertions at the chapel were required during the whole of the day, and to the families of such persons an opportunity of attending all the public services, without the inconvenience of returning home in the intervals of worship, dinner and tea were provided in the SchoolRoom under the chapel. A large number of friends dined together and by this means ample scope was allowed for arrangements as to the collectors, and their

several stations in the chapel. On the following Sunday the services were renewed, both chapels were filled to overflowing, and the preachers were, the Rev. Dr. Clarke, the Rev. Messrs. Jabez Bunting, Daniel Isaac, Theophilus Lessey, and John Waterhouse. Such was the influx of strangers, and the lively interest excited in the town, that the school-rooms belonging each of the chapels were opened, one of which was occupied by Mr. A. G. Suter, and the other by Mr. Saville. On Monday evening, the 9th, the Rev. Robert Wood preached in the new chapel; and thus closed the most interesting services ever witnessed among the Methodists in Halifax. The collections on these occasions amounted to £521 4s. 3½d., which in addition to the sum previously subscribed by those who had long seen the necessity of erecting a new chapel made a total of £2121. 4s. 3½d. The cost of the chapel being about £4000. The Wesleyan ladies of Halifax with that generosity of spirit for which they have ever been characterised, purchased, at the cost of about £173, the pulpit, and communion plate.

The building is a perfect contrast to the old chapel for external beauty, its situation however in the street, is not the best for architectural display. The interior is chaste, comely, and pleasing, though the ornamental ceiling is rather heavy than otherwise; the pews are well arranged, while the general symmetry of the whole proves the talent of the gentleman from whose plans the building was erected. The chapel is surrounded by handsome palisadoes, and will contain a congrega-

tion of about 1400 persons; it is neatly painted, and lighted with gas. Adjoining, is a small building for the chapel keeper.

The following gentlemen compose the trustees for Wesley Chapel:—

J. Waterhouse	William Heap	P. Suter	H. Neal
T. S. Swale	James Keighley	S. Denton	J. Dennison
A. G. Suter	John Rayner	S. Thompson	J. W. Foster
Wm. Hatton	Samuel Brown	S. A. Fourness	J. Farnell

In addition to the foregoing remarks with reference to Wesley Chapel, it must be observed, that an Organ, built by Mr. Renn, of Manchester, was introduced in 1833, and opened in November,—the Rev. John Anderson assisting the preachers on the occasion. The opening was further prolonged by a social tea-party in the vestry, on Monday evening, Nov. 11, 1833, after which, having adjourned into the chapel, a rich musical treat was afforded the audience, in the performance of a selection of sacred music by an extensive choir, composed of the most eminent vocalists in the neighbourhood. The cost of the organ was £240. The communion has been also recently enriched by a beautiful baptismal font, the gift of the Rev. W. M. Bunting.

A third preacher was again called into the circuit, in 1829—the Rev. J. J. Topham, who was succeeded in 1831, by the Rev. John Bumby. In 1830, the Rev. A. E. Farrar, and the Rev. R. L. Lusher, were appointed to the circuit. The Rev. R. Crowther was also put down as supernumerary, but becoming subject to a paralysis, he went to reside with his brother Isaac in Rochdale, where he died Jan. 19th, 1833.

In referring to the neighbourhood of Halifax about this time, it is pleasing to notice that a new chapel was opened at Sowerby Bridge, on Friday, July 1st, 1831. The increased population of that village required more accommodation than could be afforded by the chapel which had been enlarged in 1809; this and especially the fact of the want of room for the rapidly increased Sunday School, were the causes of the present erection. The manner in which it was effected was this,—the friends at Sowerby Bridge were to furnish the sum of £1000, an additional £100 to be taken from the old trust, with whatever might be obtained at the opening of the new chapel, and the late John Sutcliffe, Esq. engaged to complete the chapel at his own cost and expense. Such a noble-minded offer and such a munificent donation will doubtless cause Mr. Sutcliffe's name always to be associated in a prominent manner with the Wesleyan interest at Sowerby Bridge. The new chapel is built close to the public road, a short distance below the old chapel, and is a chaste piece of architecture: the internal arrangements are such as to give the chapel a pleasing appearance. Spacious vestries &c. are situate under the chapel, and a cemetery is attached.

The services on the day of opening, Friday, were conducted by the Rev. Messrs. Newton, Beaumont, and Lessey. The Sunday following the pulpit was successively occupied by Dr. Clarke, the Rev. W. M. Bunting, and the Rev. Jabez Bunting. The collections amounted to £265. So great were the crowds that

attended on the Sunday, that sermons were preached also in the old chapel.

In 1832, the third preacher, a single man, was succeeded by the Rev. W. M. Bunting; Halifax having now an appointment of three married preachers. The number of members in society, were this year stated to be 1700. The circuit was also favored with the assistance of the Rev. Joseph Jennings, who on account of ill health, was obliged to become supernumerary for a short time.

The preaching room in Arches Street having become too small for the number of children who resorted to the Sunday School, a School Room was erected in Hopwood lane in 1832. The ground upon which it was built, measuring about 22 yards by 10, was the munificent gift of G. B. Browne, Esq. and was also accompanied by a handsome subscription. The total cost of the School was about £450. Upon the building being finished, the room in Arches street was given up, and the School removed to Hopwood Lane. The number of scholars stated in a subsequent table must not be understood as implying that the school will only hold that number; there is ample accommodation for 350 scholars. A comfortable vestry is attached to the building. I here insert a few extracts from the trust deed.

The School is vested in the hands of nine trustees, upon trust that they suffer the premises to be used "as a Sunday School for the education of poor children in such manner as the major part of the Committee for the time being appointed for managing the

Halifax Wesleyan Methodist Sunday School Institution shall from time to time direct limit and appoint such Committee of management being from time to time appointed and chosen conformably to the Minutes of the Wesleyan Methodist Conference held in the year one thousand eight hundred and twenty seven or conformable to such other Minutes Rules and Regulations as any other Conference shall from time to time make and promulgate." There is a proviso that in case the Sunday School Committee should not find it expedient to keep up or continue the said School, the trustees are empowered to sell or otherwise dispose of the building; the money in such case to be applied for the benefit of some public charity in the town of Halifax, connected with the Wesleyan Society, if there should be any such charity, and if not, then to some other public charity in the town of Halifax.

The following Table, having reference to the Sunday Schools in the circuit, will be found of interest.

Name of School.	Number of Scholars.	No. of Su- perintendants and Teachers.	Name of School.	Number of Scholars.	No. of Su- perintendants and Teachers.
South-Parade..	292	52	Ovenden.....	186	88
Wesley Chapel.	258	51	Blackmires....	60	21
Hopwood Lane	200	47	Mount Tabor..	199	69
Illingworth....	115	39	Skircoat Green.	76	33
Southowram ..	377	103	Dam Head....	139	54
Elland	75	22	Total ..	1977	579

During Mr. Farrar's continuance in the circuit, it was deemed necessary to have a new appointment of trustees for South Parade chapel: when the following gentlemen were appointed :—

A. E. Farrar	T. S. Swale	B. Milnes	S. Denton
John Ashworth	A. G. Suter	P. Suter	S. Brown
Joseph Taylor	Jas. Keighley	John Rayner	Jas. Ashworth
Wm. Hatton	Wm. Heap	S. Thompson	J. W. Foster

The society suffered a loss in 1833 of one of its most efficient members, I refer to the late J. Ashworth, Esq. He died on the 2nd of June,—for more than forty years he maintained, with exemplary steadiness and uniformity, his christian profession.

In 1833 Mr. Lusher was succeeded by the Rev. Andrew Aylmer, the other preachers remaining in the circuit. The society had increased to the number of 1770. In the year 1834, a number of persons who advocated the cause of the Rev. J. R. Stephens, withdrew from the connexion; respecting this secession it would be a waste of time to enter into detail.

At the conclusion of the last chapter allusion was made to the defects in South Parade chapel. These defects, however, have happily been removed; that they were defects, and conceived to be such, is apparent from the efforts which were made, and particularly by Mr. Richard Emmett, to remove them. That gentleman promised to erect an orchestra, in form of the present one, entirely at his own cost: but this generous offer was refused, and the chapel remained in its original state until the year 1834 when the singer's pew was taken down, and a gallery erected at the east end of the chapel, to admit which the pulpit has been brought forward into the area several feet. A reading desk was also added to the pulpit, and the communion table placed under the new gallery. But the most noble

improvement was the addition of an organ, which was opened on Friday, April 25th, 1834, when a sermon was preached by the Rev. J. Everett. On the following Sunday three sermons were preached by the stationed preachers, and the opening was concluded on Monday, the 28th, by a social tea-party and musical service. The cost of the organ (built by Mr. Renn) was £350.

In consequence of these alterations, the chapel is now made to rank with the foremost Methodist chapels in the kingdom; divested of every gaudy appearance, the interior is neat, airy, and approaching to the elegant, while the general view on entrance is truly noble and impressive. Its exterior might be considerably improved by the erection of two chaste porticos over the entrances, and by the extension of the palisadoes to the extremity of the grave-yard on one side, and to the gateway on the other. The chapel is not lighted with gas, as are most of the chapels in the town, but by oil. It is unadorned by any monuments or armorial bearings, but near the communion table there is a plain marble tablet affixed to the wall, bearing an inscription to the memory of the Rev. Jonathan Crowther.

At the conference held in Sheffield, in 1835, Mr. Galland having been requested by the quarterly meeting to remain a third year in the circuit received an appointment accordingly, the Rev. P. Duncan and the Rev. G. Turner being his colleagues. Number in society 1577.

The writer cannot bid adieu to the reader without congratulating him upon the success which has attended the Methodist ministry in the town and neighbourhood

treated upon in the present work. Nearly ninety years ago Mr. Wesley attempted to preach at the old market cross, in Halifax; the inhabitants were in an uproar, their savage malignity seemed insatiable, and amid the missiles thrown by the mob he was obliged to leave the town. Through the perseverance of the Methodist preachers, how different the scene! Prior to the establishment of Methodism in Halifax the town had but two regular places of worship, while now it can boast of 14, besides preaching rooms and sunday schools in detached buildings. The Halifax circuit, (the farthest point of which is but $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles distant,) comprises nine Wesleyan Chapels and 12 other preaching places; the parish itself comprises about 30 Methodist chapels, the number of school rooms and places where preachings are held being not less than 100. When we add to this list, 16 other chapels and a corresponding number of preaching places belonging to the New Connexion, and other bodies who style themselves "Methodist," together with those chapels belonging to other christian denominations in the parish, but which have equally sprung from Methodism, well may we use the exalted language of the inspired penman—"Who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord?"